

NOTES

ON THE

WEST INDIES.

VOL. I.

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NOTES
ON THE
WEST INDIES:

WRITTEN DURING THE
EXPEDITION UNDER THE COMMAND
OF THE LATE
GENERAL SIR RALPH ABERCROMBY :
INCLUDING OBSERVATIONS ON
THE ISLAND OF BARBADOES,
AND THE SETTLEMENTS CAPTURED BY THE BRITISH TROOPS, UPON
THE COAST OF GUIANA ;

LIKEWISE REMARKS RELATING TO THE
CREOLES AND SLAVES OF THE WESTERN COLONIES, AND
THE INDIANS OF SOUTH AMERICA :

WITH OCCASIONAL HINTS, REGARDING,

The Seasoning, or Yellow Fever
OF HOT CLIMATES.

By **GEORGE PINCKARD, M. D.**
OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS,
DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL OF HOSPITALS TO HIS MAJESTY'S FORCES,
AND PHYSICIAN TO THE BLOOMSBURY DISPENSARY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

It is a strange thing that in sea-voyages, where there is nothing to be seen, but sky and sea, men should make diaries; but in land-travels, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it; as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation.

LORD VERULAM.

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1806.

DEDICATION.

TO FRIENDSHIP.

LOOKING round, as it is said authors are wont, for a great personage, to whose name I might dedicate my work, I have not found it possible to fix upon any one, to whom I could with so much propriety consign it, as to ITS PARENT! Accept, then, Benign Power! Thine offspring: cherish it, even as Thou hast begotten it: and cause Thy warmest influence ever to animate the heart of

Thy faithful and devoted Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

*Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury,
March 15, 1806.*

P R E F A C E.

FROM the entreaties of a Friend the following "Notes" were written for his private eye :—from the sollicitations of other friends they are now offered to the eye of the Public. The former were tender persuasions, and, in obeying them, the author had much and sincere gratification : he wishes he could feel as well assured that he is pursuing the path of wisdom, by yielding to the latter. But he is too sensible that what may be amusing, or may, even, be deemed valuable, in the closet of friendship, may be very unfit to meet the less-prejudiced judgment of the world ; and he is not without many apprehensions, lest a flattering partiality—a partiality which often deals praise, where no merit is due, should have induced him to present to the Public what ought never to have escaped beyond the limits of private perusal.

Conscious how little his "Notes" are calculated to withstand the scrutinizing severity of criticism, he may observe that, at no time, during the period of writing them, had he a thought that they were destined to appear at the bar of the public. To fulfil the wishes of one, whose sentiments and opinions were dear to him, was a grateful task : it was congenial to his feelings, and, regardless of studied rules, he performed it with all the freedom of familiar intercourse. He, daily, devoted to his friend the few last minutes, previous to embracing his pillow : it, consequently, happened that his remarks were, frequently, traced with a drowsy pen, or hurried over with a wearied and reluctant arm : but, from adopting this habit, the busy occupation of the day suffered no interruption ; all the occurrences were noted, whilst they were strongly alive in the memory ; and those who have known the privation of a long and perilous absence from their home, and the objects of their esteem, will comprehend the many happy associations, which were, thus, brought to sweeten the hours of repose.

At the time of the author's arrival in the West Indies every thing, in the tropical regions, was new to him. His desire to obtain information was ardent, and without waiting to digest his remarks

into a systematic train—to stamp them with the importance of method—or to improve them by more mature observation, he endeavoured to convey, to his friend, a correct and faithful representation of the feelings impressed upon his mind, by the novel scenes around him, whilst he was yet a stranger, and before habit and familiarity had weakened their effect.

He fears that the frequent repetitions, necessary to this mode of communication, will be found to be more tedious, and, in some instances, even more multiplied than a “thrice told tale,” but he saw no way of avoiding them, without altering the whole plan of the work, and depriving it of the only merit, which he feels it has any title to claim, viz. that of giving the occurrences, precisely as they passed before the eye. He was not engaged in a deliberate voyage of discovery; nor did the busy and anxious duties of his appointment allow him time to devote to pursuits of minute investigation. The utmost he could hope was to catch events as they passed, and faithfully to note them, from the impression of the fleeting moment: and, if it should be objected to him that the remarks are not always of high importance, he would observe that it is not from great occurrences, alone, that a correct judgment is formed of men

and things. It is more from the daily, common round, than from the great and blazoned events, that a just knowledge is acquired of the characters of individuals :—perhaps, also, of empires, nations, and colonies.

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LETTER I.

Concerning the correspondence of distant friends. Disappointment the author's friend will be likely to experience in the correspondence solicited. Journey to Southampton. Mail coach associates. The author joins the army—reports himself at head quarters. His sensations upon placing himself under military command. Military hospital. Author's pursuits upon the day of his arrival at Southampton.

Southampton, Oct. 3. 1795

THE happiness we enjoy by preserving an intercourse with our friends when separated from them, beyond the reach of personal interview, ranks amongst the highest blessings of civilized life. The social principle which attaches man to his species, influences him wheresoever he may be placed, or whatsoever his condition—it prevails equally in savage life and in polished society:—but it is to navigation and the art of writing, those powerful engines which have established a freedom of intercourse throughout the wide

extent of the globe, that we are indebted for the superior enjoyment of communicating with far distant friends, and thereby rendering our separation less intolerable.

Yet, will you, my friend, I fear, but too soon discover how much you have sacrificed your judgment to your friendship, in so strenuously requiring frequent communications, from me, during my absence from England.—In the correspondence your kindness has exacted you will have to encounter a task, while all the advantages of amusement and instruction will be mine: but you have brought it upon yourself, and must, therefore, be content to see me your debtor, assured of my regret that the benefit, to be derived, cannot be reciprocal. Did I even possess all the glowing and happy talents necessary to descriptive narration, the busy employment of my time, and the unsettled state of my mind, amidst the perpetual hurry and uncertainty of military movements, must prevent me from observing, and still more from relating what may pass before me, with the accuracy you might expect, or I could

desire. Indeed, were genius mine, and all the acute and penetrating powers fitted for the task, still, from being unable to mature my remarks by the recurrent eye of a continued residence, all I could offer you, would, necessarily, be superficial and undigested.

You will perceive, therefore, that, under all circumstances, yours cannot fail to be a trial of patience, for, you can only expect the perusal of hasty notes, hastily collected, by an observer whose time must be devoted to the duties of his appointment—and whose movements and pauses must be regulated by those exigencies of the army which more immediately, and imperiously demand his attention.

But it were needless to enter into a detail of the allowances you will have to make. You already know them : hence, as apologies are irksome to you, I forego all further comment, and, meeting you as you desire, proceed to my subject. You command me, and, as the soft dictates of friendship usually pulsate upon my heart with an influence

too grateful to be disregarded — my pen obeys.

The adventures of a stage-coach are sometimes amusing, but it happened that my journey, hither, was peculiarly devoid of incident, being, merely, a dark nocturnal ride, which passed on without any thing to divert, or to interest.

According to my usual habit I felt no disposition to sleep, but, wrapt in pensive stillness, sat undisturbed, and let my cogitative faculties have their way. My fat companions, whom you saw in the mail, proved to be three of the sturdy sons of old Ocean. They had formed rather an intimate acquaintance with a certain personal pronoun; and, in abruptness of manner, seemed to be as nearly related to that great personage Mr. John Bull; as to his kind patron, father Neptune. If I mistake them not, they were the commanders of some trading ships, or transports, going out with the convoy. The one sitting upon the same seat with myself, so spread his huge sea-worn limbs as to occupy nearly the

whole width of the coach, thrusting my, comparatively, diminutive person up into the corner like a very bodkin. Each of them, planting himself, with a loud grunt, quite at his ease, they all lowered down their travelling caps, and, turning into their births in the several corners, sunk as profoundly into the arms of Morpheus as though they had been quietly swinging in their hammocks upon the smooth surface of a western ocean. Occasionally they were rather loud in starts of sonorous repose, otherwise they caused no interruption of my meditations ; and as darkness deprived me of all the variety of passing objects, the want of sleep was, in some measure, compensated by my senses falling into the slumber of weakened impression.

Amidst the stillness of night we rolled swiftly on, without impediment or delay, always finding horses in readiness at the place of change. Even the great business of eating and drinking was more than commonly disregarded. No social hour of supper was observed : nor were our conductors troubled with those frequent calls of thirst, which are,

commonly, so vexatious and annoying to the passengers. To arrive at the end of the journey seemed alike the object of all. Within the coach it was my lot, alone, to be sensible of time, or distance. Our sleeping captains might have fancied themselves to have been transferred by some sudden or sylph-like aid; for, the curtains of their eyes but dropped with the closing day of London, to be again uplifted with the rising sun of Southampton.

We arrived at an early hour, and after taking the refreshment of a cold ablution, and a plentiful breakfast, I proceeded, without delay, to head-quarters, to announce my arrival, and to pay my respects to the commander in chief. It happened that the inspector-general of hospitals was with Sir Ralph Abercromby, at the time I called, I, therefore, reported my appointment to both—and put myself under command.

The effect of this moment, upon my mind, I had not fully anticipated. It was a moment big with sensation, but I cannot say—with delight! A sudden impulse flushed

within me, which seemed to create unexpected feelings, as it were; of regret, on the surrender of my liberty. Recalling the days of my youth, when, at school, I was subject to the will of a master, my mind, in vivid remembrance, rapidly retraced all the images of a restraint which had so long been irksome to it, and in high impatience of the impression, busy appeal seemed to call aloud, “Dost thou not recollect that it was then, the anxious theme of all thy hopes to escape from fetters, and gain the exercise of thine own will? Didst thou not anticipate, as the consummation of thy best wishes, the proud and happy period when thou should’st arrive at the power of self-command? and, this attained, would’st thou, now, surrender the freedom of action so long, and so anxiously contemplated as thy greatest good—would’st thou abandon the happy acquisition for which thou hadst languished—for which thou hadst toiled through so many tedious years?”

Such were the repugnant, and discouraging appeals of momentary impulse; but sober reason quickly resumed her throne, and, pur-

fuings a more tempered train of ideas, banished the hostile impression; when the renewal of former contemplations soon restored me to myself.

From the quarters of the commander in chief, I accompanied the inspector-general to visit the sick, and, in professional pursuit, forgot the wayward feelings of a discordant moment.

This walk afforded me the opportunity of taking an early view of the military hospital, and I have great pleasure in remarking to you that it does much credit to the doctor's * judgment and industry. Placed in the direction of the medical department, his exertions have demonstrated how essential it is to commit that important appointment to an officer whose experience qualifies him for all the various duties it demands. From a well devised arrangement, forwarded by a zealous and laudable industry, he has caused a large old building, late a sugar-house, to be con-

* Sir J. M'Namara Hayes.

verted into a commodious, and well-aired hospital; where the unfortunate sick are comfortably placed, duly attended, and conveniently, as well as liberally accommodated with all that their afflicted situation demands.

After my visit at the hospital, I spent the remainder of the morning in perambulating the town and its environs, and in making various calls upon my friends and acquaintances. At the hour of dinner I found myself *en famille* with colonel M., whose lady is among the unhappy inconsolables, whom this sad expedition is about to separate from their Lords. In the afternoon I joined several of my professional comrades at the inspector-general's; and, to complete the round of a busy day, accompanied a party, in the evening, to the public rooms: the night I crown to you, for, as my pen traces the hour, the clock strikes——twelve.

LETTER II.

Scenery, promenades, amusements, &c. of Southampton. Its many accommodations for the sick and the well. Reflections upon visiting the encampment near Southampton. Remarks upon the discouraging sentiments conveyed to the troops. The author obtains leave of absence to return to London. Probable mistake respecting the author, and some of his comrades. The utility of persons engaged in the service accommodating themselves to circumstances. Facility of yielding to events a leading feature in the character of the French. Reflections upon this principle as forming a contrast between the French and English. Further observations upon the French character.

Southampton, Oct. 5. 1795^d

WERE you a stranger to Southampton, I might offer you many full pages upon its delightful situation, and the many charms of its environs; for it cannot be disputed that this town and neighbourhood afford more of pleasing scenery, convenience, and accommodation, than most other spots in England. *Within* the town, the sick and the feeble have the benefit of sea-bathing, the well and the dissipated the amusements of a playhouse, public rooms, card-playing, and assemblies:—

without it, all may find recreation—the various promenades, either for walking, riding, rowing, or sailing, being such as to invite and to gratify even the most fastidious. Pleasant walks, delightful water excursions, and the finest forest rides, abound on every quarter, offering all the variety of open country, inclosed fields, sea and river views, and woodland scenery. Nor are the common and more generally striking lions of the neighbourhood less abundant: there being, within reach, a multitude of towns, places, and objects which usually attract the attention of strangers, such as Portsmouth and its dock-yard, Gosport and its hospital, the Isle of Wight, the fleet at Spithead, Winchester, Lymington, Lyndhurst, Netley Abbey, &c. &c. &c.

In short, Southampton would seem to be one of the few places equally calculated for the invalid, the idle, and the gay; for each may find the pursuit fitted for his habits and inclinations. Without the too common excess of dissipation, this place offers every recreation and amusement that a rational mind can desire; and, in the happy combination

of its rural scenery, it presents all the first requisites of a summer retirement. Nor will the mere Epicurean visitor be disappointed of his gratification,—for the market is plentifully supplied with the good things of life. The fish, poultry, butcher's-meat, and vegetables are not only abundant, but, also, the best of their kind.

The town is, commonly, well filled with company, during the summer ; but, this year, from the attraction of a camp, and the crowd of military assembled to proceed with the expedition, it is overflowing, and, consequently, all is life and motion. Still those who seek retirement can readily find it, whether in the less public parts of the town, in the hedge-row path, the lonely sea-side walk, or, in pensive ramble, amidst the deep shades of the forest :—or, they may escape from the busy crowd, and noisy throng, by retiring to the still surface, and the tranquil scenes of the river.

The town itself bears all the appearance of neatness and comfort, and the many hand-

some villas near it not only improve the surrounding scenery, but, likewise, impose a general air of wealth and opulence.

As you know my habit of visiting what are called *the lions* of a place, as soon as possible after my arrival, you will conclude that I have not neglected the encampment near Southampton; and, in this, you will judge correctly, for, verily, I have not been unmindful of it. I have made it a visit of very attentive inspection, and much do I wish it were possible for words to convey, to you, all the host of feelings that rushed into my mind upon the occasion. A whole volume of mixed sensations crowded my bosom, and I scarcely knew which was predominant. Viewing the soldiers in full contemplation of the strict order, the manly deportment, and the elevated enthusiasm of the character, my mind traversed, in hasty review, all the perils and hardships,—the glory and honours, which attach to a military life. I felt a sense of pride and gratification on seeing so fine a body of men ready to join in our expedi-

tion. My imagination saw all the inviting forms of success before them. I observed them in battle, on the opposite side of the Atlantic; felt honoured in their bravery; hailed them victorious, and, crowned with the laurels they had won, re-conducted them, in safety, to their home, and their friends.

Yet the bright picture was not without its shades: restless fancy went on to busy herself in gloomy comparisons, in painful contrasts, and afflicting reverses! Viewing the brilliancy, the order, and the comfort of a domestic camp, in the peaceful fields of England, she called up ideas of a confused and tumultuous encampment upon the enemy's soil, threatened by the approach of a daring foe, routed by blood-thirsty cohorts, or stormed by a horde of merciless brigands! Next appeared the dire confusion of battle, the distress of defeat, and the dread effects of panic, with all the horrid scene of bleeding wounds, dying groans, and mangled bodies, and, still worse than these, were pictured the fatal ills of climate:—yellow-fever opened her all-

devouring jaws, and, in deadly disease, exposed a contrast, yet more afflictive, than all the perils of battle or defeat.

Although, in my mind, the more happy face of the picture maintained its impression, I am sorry to believe that the general sensation of the country is in sympathy with the opposite. A degree of horror seems to have overspread the nation from the late destructive effects of the yellow-fever, or, what the multitude denominates, the West India plague ; inasmuch that a sense of terror attaches to the very name of the West Indies—many, even, considering it synonymous with the grave ; and, perhaps, it were not too much to say, that all, who have friends in the expedition, apprehend more from disease than the sword.

Such discouraging sentiments I am sorry to find have not been concealed from the troops. The fearful farewell of desponding friends is every day, and hour, either heedlessly, or artfully sounded in their ears. People walking about the camp, attending at a review, or a parade, or merely upon seeing

parties of soldiers in the streets, are heard to exclaim,—“ Ah, poor fellows ! you are going to your last home ! What pity such brave men should go to that West India grave !—to that hateful climate to be killed by the plague ! Poor fellows, good bye, farewell ! we shall never see you back again !” With such like accents are the ears of the soldiers incessantly saluted ; and the hopeless predictions are loudly echoed, for the worst of purposes, by the designing, whose turbulent spirits would feast in exciting discontentment among the troops.

But, strongly as I would condemn every attempt, and every incaution, which might create even the feeblest ray of terror in the breasts of the soldiers, yet I cannot but be sensible, that it is a service of imminent danger : and, while I look at these men, in high admiration of their intrepid character, the recollection of the general sensation, which prevails respecting them, steals upon me, and my bosom heaves a silent pang in the consciousness that a great majority of them will never return. Still I would hope that

every soldier is governed by the same individual feelings as myself, and that each is fully impressed with the belief that it will be his lot to escape. With the greatest truth I may aver that, notwithstanding all the depressing rumours of the moment, and the trembling alarm of friends and relatives, I do not feel the slightest personal apprehension, either with respect to climate, or disease. What shall prove to be my fate, amidst all the chances of service, it were idle to conjecture, but I shall embark with confident assurance of returning to my friends, and to Old England.

It is the duty of soldiers to serve wherever their country requires, and hence the attempts to inspire them with a dread of climate are not less cruel, than mischievous. Designed to injure the country, they operate by distressing the feelings of the individual, whose noble mind knows no fear of death from other cause ; but, if he falls, falls without a murmur—glorifying in having devoted himself to his country, and, calmly, resigning himself to the fate of war.

It does not appear that the expedition is so, immediately, upon the eve of sailing as is generally imagined. The whole of the troops are not yet assembled, nor are all the transports in readiness. Finding this the case, I have obtained leave of absence for a week, and have the prospect of seeing you again before my departure.

Repeating my visit at the Inspector General's, I have learned, with some surprise, that my name is not upon the return of the hospital staff of this armament, and I begin to fear that my being ordered to Southampton has been the offspring of error. Two other staff-physicians are in the same predicament, and it is, even, probable that, like many of the more idle visitors, we have only made a trip to see the camp, and go back again.

It is not unlikely that we may find our names upon the St. Domingo staff, instead of the staff of the Leeward Islands; in which case we may expect to make a journey to Cork, to join the expedition about to sail from Ireland. This would be a disappointment to

me, beyond the mere inconvenience of, again, moving my person and my baggage, for, in the Leeward Island division, I have acquaintances, whom I had hoped to find my comrades on service : while, with the St. Domingo staff, there are very few persons to whom I am known. But I am prepared for all the uncertainties and disappointments, I may have to encounter : considering the duties of my appointment as the great object of my attention, I shall make it my study to remove whatever difficulties may occur, by subduing them.

Except in what regards individual connections, there is, perhaps, no question of choice between the two divisions of the armament ; the service, so far as it respects our department, being, essentially, the same in one part of the West Indies as in another ; and, if I should be ordered to Cork to join the St. Domingo expedition, I hope I have philosophy enough to soothe the disappointment, by regarding the journey through Wales, and Ireland,—two countries which I have been long desirous to visit, in some degree as a compensation.

In my present pursuit I feel the necessity of establishing it as a principle to view occurrences in their best light, and, instead of repining that more cannot be obtained, to seek comfort from what falls in my path. Were we to adopt this as a leading maxim, in all situations, it is more than possible that we might, often, have happy hours, where we know only those of misery ; for such a principle, applied with wisdom, would tend very much to blunt the sharp thorns of life. As if the evils of the world were not enough severe, we, too commonly, attach ourselves to the unhappy face of events; brood over fancied sorrows, and, eagerly, multiply our disappointments, wholly overlooking the more favorable features from which peace, harmony, and comfort might derive.

“ Yet some there are, of men I think the worst,
 Poor imps ! unhappy if they can't be curs'd,
 For ever brooding over mis'ry's eggs”

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This gloomy tendency of our disposition forms a remarkable characteristic between the people of England and those of France ;

while an Englishman, in afflictive contemplation, dwells on misfortune, even to suicide—a Frenchman, let the affairs of the moment be never so adverse, always finds wherewithal to attach his better hopes; and, surely, when any occurrence proves less happy than we had anticipated, it is wise policy rather to extract from it all the good we can, than to give up ourselves wholly to the sadness of disappointment, because it fulfils not our every wish.

From this facility of yielding to events, it has been said that the French people know how to play the game of happiness better than the English. It may be so. But still it is possible that the principle, to which I allude, may be carried to excess. Where it is the effect of a patient and manly fortitude, and employed to support us against injury, misfortune, and disappointment, it is both amiable and virtuous, and may be dignified with the title of philosophy. But it is sometimes the effect of frivolity, or depravity—is connected with vice and dissipation, and highly unworthy. When proceeding from this source, it supersedes all the finer feelings

and sentiments of the mind. It destroys the natural affections, and, weakening the attachment which ought to exist, between man and man, tends to make mere egotists of us all. It not only renders us insensible to our own misfortunes, and the common ills of life, but makes us callous to the sufferings of others, and shuts the heart against those feelings of sympathy and compassion, which, being founded in humanity, are among the highest adornments of our nature.

· Notwithstanding my determination to pass over the ills of my present employment as lightly as possible, I confess myself to be one of those dull Britons who would hope never to see the period when French levity shall supersede John Bull's sedate integrity. If a Frenchman dissipates the passing moment with greater mirth and cheerfulness, still there is something in the more solid attachment, and the blunt honesty of an Englishman, which is more important, and more interests and engages our esteem.

As a stranger, or traveller, I look not for

friendship, or for confidence, and have always hailed that urbanity and ease of manner, which make the moment pleasant; or have been in good humour with that smooth and extended politeness which means — nothing at all! But, when residing among Englishmen,—my countrymen, whom I regard more as the relatives of one great family, I have always seemed to expect a degree of stability and sincerity, which it were idle to look for in the mere traveller's hour.

The plodding pursuits, and sober attachments of the English, possess not sufficient *goût* for the appetite of a Frenchman, whose life may be said to constitute one system—one continued series of intrigue. In all his occupations he requires the high seasoning of variety. Whatever the substance of his pursuit, intrigue is always the condiment. Without a spice of intrigue the board were insipid, however sumptuous. A Frenchman troubles not himself with the affections; but is a dupe to his passions. His attachments wear away with the moment, and are

not thought of beyond the period of being convenient to his purpose. He is often disappointed, but never dismayed. All regret, for the past, he buries in some new scheme or adventure. If one project fails, he, instantly, flies to another, exclaiming, "Ah, Diable ! cela ne me convient pas. Il y faut un autre projet. Allons ! tâchons encore."—If he succeeds not to-day, he has always a new plan for to-morrow. If discomfited in the scheme of the morning, he feels certain of success in the *nouveau projet* of the evening. Something new, something not of plain or ready attainment—something possessing a real or a fancied intricacy is always imagined, or attempted. No matter how vast, or how frivolous the object—whether a revolution of the state, or a game of loto. It diverts his attention, dissipates the moment, shields him from the sadness of disappointment, and shuts the door against ennui. From the conduct, usually, pursued it would seem to be a leading feature, in the character of a Frenchman, not to attach himself seriously, or permanently to any thing ; but to avail himself of all passing circumstances, yielding to each, or

causing each to yield to his purpose. In this way he travels the great journey of life with less of care and sorrow than the more sedate of other nations; sombre reflection offering no impediment to a path, which, at every step, bears his loved motto,—“Vive là bagatelle!”

I am aware that you will plead very broad exceptions to this, as a general character, and I most readily admit them; for, although the reverse is too common, I have seen Frenchmen, under misfortune, whose patient submission, instead of bearing the marks of levity and frivolity, has exhibited all the manly firmness of true dignity and philosophy.

But I am wandering from my subject—abruptly, therefore, Good night!

LETTER III.

The author returns to London with Doctor Master. They are ordered to join the St. Domingo staff, at Cork. Author passes a few days with his friends. Provides new supplies of baggage. Medical officers' uniform.

London, Oct. 9. 1795

I HAD hoped that you would have received my last letter, before you left town, and, in the flattering expectation of seeing you again, before my departure from England, I hastened to your home, immediately, upon my arrival in London; when I was extremely disappointed to find that you were gone, and that I cannot have the gratification of, personally, telling you, that my journey to Southampton proves to have been only a visit to the camp.

Finding that we were not appointed to the Leeward Island division, Doctor Master and myself returned to Town, and, as we suspected, found our names upon the list of the St. Domingo staff. We are now directed to proceed in the Ulysses, armed transport, to

Cork, to join the expedition under major-general Whyte. But as this ship is now in the Thames, and is to touch at Spithead on her way, it will give us a few days to prepare our baggage, and instead of going round with her by sea, we can put our things on board, and meet the vessel at Portsmouth. I shall thus gain a few pleasant hours, among my friends, which I had not anticipated ; and shall have time to provide myself with such necessaries as I may require, both for the voyage, and the climate. Most of the few things which I had been able to hurry together, during the short moment allowed, previous to my journey to Southampton, are already rendered useless to me, in consequence of a subsequent arrangement, requiring the officers of the hospital staff to appear in a certain prescribed uniform. How will you smile to fancy your friend, who hath so long clothed himself in sable, like a very lobster, changed, all at once, to a gay scarlet, and fringed and embroidered with gold. Come and see him, and be assured that, whether he be gay or sad, his coat bright or black, he is always, faithfully, - - - - - yours.

LETTER IV.

Author returns to Southampton. Destination of the Ulysses reported to be changed. Expedition still delayed. Author visits the theatre, and public rooms at Southampton. Theatrical Corps.

Southampton, Oct. 19.

SOUTHAMPTON again? Yes, be not surprised! you perceive that I am in a way to be, early, initiated into all the sudden and uncertain movements of a military life.

We came to this place *en route* to Portsmouth and Spithead, where we were to join the Ulysses, on her way from the river Thames to Cove harbour; and we have now the singular comfort of being told that the destination of this ship is changed, and that she is not to go round to Cork, but to proceed, forthwith, to the West Indies, in company with the Leeward Island division.

Should this information prove to be correct, or should not the ship very soon reach Spithead, Master and myself may be ordered

to Cork in some other vessel, before she arrives, and, in this case, we shall have the mortification, of being compelled to proceed to St. Domingo without our baggage, which was put on board in the Thames: but our instructions still direct us to the *Ulysses*, and unless these should be, officially, countermanded, we shall wait the arrival of that ship, considering the information which has been conveyed to us, only as idle rumour.

Every thing here is pressing forward with all possible dispatch, but to get such an immense expedition to sea, is a work of, infinitely, greater magnitude than those who do not think to the details of it can be aware of. Probably it may be, yet, some weeks before the fleet can sail, notwithstanding all the activity and exertions used to hasten it.

Should we be long detained, on shore, I shall be mortified that we could not remain at Southampton, which, in addition to the many advantages of its situation, is now in high season, and as pleasant as Portsmouth is reputed to be disagreeable.

You will admit that I avail myself of the present moment, and neglect not the passing occasion; when I tell you that, since my return hither on the 16th instant, I have made visits to the environs of the town—rode through the forest, and to the camp—passed two evenings at the theatre, and one at the public rooms.

I am sorry to remark, contrary to the good order of Southampton, that, each of the two nights, when I happened to visit the theatre, the tranquillity of the audience was disturbed, the performance interrupted, and the whole house brought into a scene of riotous confusion. The first time, it arose from some idle etiquette, which I could not exactly comprehend, respecting one of the actresses coming forward to announce her own benefit; and did not subside until, with great reluctance, and after much delay, she, submissively, made her appearance. The second time, it proceeded from a number of officers and other spectators crowding upon the stage so as to interrupt the performers; and only ceased, after much delay and confusion, by

all of them being actually hissed and pelted off the stage.

As it happens at most country places, the theatrical corps consists of a few tolerably good actors, and many very bad ones: but, upon the whole, the town seems satisfied with their performance, and at this moment of full crowd, offers them great encouragement.

To-morrow I leave Southampton, and, in a few days, shall have the pleasure of addressing you from—the Wapping of England.

LETTER V:

Author and his comrades detained in suspense at Portsmouth. Objects commonly noticed by strangers in and about that place. Portsmouth different in time of war and of peace. Hint that in peace it might be an economical retirement for prodigals. Anecdote shewing its extravagance in time of war. Profligacy observed upon the streets of Portsmouth. Description of the dress and person of a "Portsmouth Poll." Progress of a long absent tar, upon landing at Portsmouth. Visit to the dock yard. Honourable retreat of Admiral Cornwallis. The Haslar hospital. Intended military hospital at Gosport. Obliging attention of Dr. Lind. Author addressed by a bounty-man at the Haslar. The ramparts. Observations on the sad necessity of man fortifying himself against the ravages of his own species.

Portsmouth, Oct. 23. 1796

NO tidings of the Ulysses! Four long days have passed away, since my arrival at this place, and I am still left in anxious uncertainty respecting my baggage, and my passage.

My colleagues, Doctors Master and Henderson, have, again, joined me, and, like myself, have passed four heavy days of suspense,

with only the prospect of extending it to fourteen more. Being sadly tired of a Portsmouth inn, and seeing no prospect of soon embarking, we have taken private lodgings in the hope of passing, more quietly, our tedious hours of waiting.

Portsmouth verifies, to our experience, all that we had heard of its unpleasantness, and vulgar immorality. The great objects, which call forth the attention of strangers, are the dock-yard, the Haslar hospital, and the fine walk upon the ramparts. All these we have visited, likewise South-Down castle, and the Forton and Porchester prisons : nor have we neglected that new modern messenger the telegraph, by which intelligence can be conveyed, from this place to the Admiralty, at Charing-cross, in the short period of ten minutes.

Having thus exhausted all the novelty of the town and its environs, it only remains to us to lapse into the dull round of the place. It is said that in days of peace, long grass grows upon the streets. In time of

war they are more trodden ; but, even then, the busy activity of the place occurs only at intervals, as when a fleet comes in, or is about to sail : at which periods the town becomes all crowd and hurry, for a few days, and then suddenly reverts to a languid intermission of dullness and inactivity.

The rent of houses and apartments—the price of provisions, &c. differ very much in times of peace and of war. Indeed, we are told that the houses, and lodgings, have their war price, and their peace price, distinctly fixed. Viewing its present extravagance, if Portsmouth should be, proportionally, cheap in time of peace, as it is dear in war, it might serve as a place of retirement for our prodigals, and render unnecessary their tours of retrenchment to the mountains of Wales, or of Switzerland :—and, perhaps, there are few places that might sooner bring them to sober reflection ; for it is lifeless and insipid as the most forlorn might desire, and would seem well calculated to temper the mind into the gloomy sedateness of penitence.

The following anecdote, said to be of recent occurrence, will exemplify, to you, what may be termed the war-extravagance of Portsmouth. A gentleman, who had been ill, called on his way to Southampton, to dine at one of the inns, and having but a weak appetite, ordered only a veal-cutlet, with a pint of wine, for which he was charged *eighteen* shillings. Conceiving, there must be some error, he desired to speak with the landlord, who, instead of conducting himself with the civility of a person obliged by the preference given to his house, doubled the offence by his insolence. Upon the gentleman telling him that he apprehended some mistake had occurred, respecting the demand made for his dinner, he looked at the bill, and, immediately, replied, "Yes, Sir! there is a mistake, I perceive." Accordingly he took the account back with him, into the bar, as the gentleman supposed, to make the necessary deductions—but, to his surprise, the waiter quickly returned with it, increased from *eighteen* to *nineteen* shillings.

The gentleman feeling enraged at the

imposition itself, and, more especially, at the insolent manner of aggravating it, desired the landlord might again be called, when he informed him that if he, still, insisted upon his enormous charge, he would publish it in all the newspapers, and set a mark upon his house, which should make it notorious throughout London and the country: upon which the impertinent host, still persisting in his demand, drily replied, “And when you have made it so well known, will you be so good, sir, as to add, N. B. *The house to let!*”—There was no contending with such insolence. The man had made his fortune—and it was in vain to attempt to teach him civility, good manners, or common honesty. The gentleman, therefore, paid the bill, and left the house, lamenting that his only remedy was—to avoid it in future.

In respect to streets, houses, markets, and traffic, Portsmouth is not unlike other country towns, but Portsmouth-point, Portsea-common, and some other parts of the town have peculiarities which seem to sanction the celebrity the place has acquired. In some quar-

ters, Portsmouth is not only filthy and crowded, but crowded with a class of low and abandoned beings, who seem to have declared open war against every habit of common decency and decorum. You know the strong desire I have to contemplate human nature, under all her varied forms, but those she, here, assumes, I am sorry to tell you, are, uncommonly, hideous and disgusting. The riotous, drunken, and immoral scenes of this place, perhaps, exceed all others. Commonly gross obscenity and intoxication preserve enough of diffidence to seek the concealment of night, and, assuming a kind of decency, strive to hide themselves from the public eye: but, here, hordes of profligate females are seen reeling in drunkenness, or plying upon the streets in open day, with a broad immodesty which puts the great orb of noon to the blush. These daughters of Cypria are not only of manners peculiar, but likewise of such peculiar figure and apparel, that it were, perhaps, difficult, in any other part of England, to find a correct resemblance of—
“sweet Poll of Portsmouth.”

To form to yourself an idea of these tender languishing nymphs—these lovely fighting ornaments of the fair-sex, imagine a something of more than Amazonian stature, having a crimson countenance, emblazoned with all the effrontery of Cyprian confidence, and broad Bacchanalian folly; give to her bold countenance the warlike features of two wounded cheeks, a tumid nose, scarred and battered brows, and a pair of blackened eyes, with balls of red; then add to her sides a pair of brawny arms, fit to encounter a Colossus, and set her upon two ancles like the fixed supporters of a gate. Afterwards, by way of apparel, put upon her a loose flying cap, a man's black hat, a torn neckerchief, stone rings on her fingers, and a dirty white, or tawdry flowered gown, with short apron, and a pink petticoat; and thus, will you have something very like the figure of a "*Portsmouth Poll*."

Callous to every sense of shame, these daring objects reel about the streets, lie in wait at the corners, or, like the devouring kite, hover over every landing-place, eager to

pounce upon their prey; and each unhappy tar, who has the misfortune to fall under their talons, has no hope of escape till plucked of every feather. The instant he sets foot on dry land he is embraced by the neck, hugged round the waist, or hooked in the arm by one or more of these tender Dulcineas; and, thus, poor Jack with pockets full of prize-money, or rich with the wages of a long and dangerous cruize, is, instantly, dragged (though, it must be confessed, not always against his consent) to a bagnio, or some filthy pot-house, where he is kept drinking, smoking, singing, dancing, swearing, and rioting, amidst one continued scene of debauchery, all day and all night, and all night and all day, until his every farthing is gone. He is, then, left to sleep till he is sober, and awakes to return, penniless, to his ship—with much cause to think himself fortunate, if an empty purse be the worst consequence of his, long wished for, ramble ashore.

My visit to the dock-yard was of a nature highly gratifying. I contemplated this vast depôt of stores—this great workshop of our

navy, as the emblem of our nation's glory. No part of it escaped my eye. I regarded each foot with all the enthusiastic veneration of a Briton, proud of his country's greatness, and of the splendid and heroic achievements of its defenders.

The Tigre, ship of war, lately taken from the French, by Lord Bridport, being in dock, we had the opportunity of going on board, to witness the injuries she had sustained from the thunderbolts of Britain. Her shattered condition bespoke, in strong expression, the terrible effects of a close-fought action at sea. Yet were we told that all she had suffered was trivial, compared to what is seen, in many vessels, after a battle. If so, it is equally matter of surprise that such vessels should be kept afloat, as that any should ever have been constructed capable of withstanding the destructive batteries now brought against them.

While examining the many wounds of the Tigre, my mind called up, in vivid association, the late noble retreat made by our gallant admiral Cornwallis, which I have always

thought did him high and singular credit. Conducted as it was, it had all the merit of a great victory, and I well remember that, at the first moment of perusing the dispatches concerning it, I was impressed with a high sense of that officer's judgment, and his valour, and felt that I must ever retain the highest respect for his professional talents. To have defended an inferior fleet, against such unequal force, and to have brought every ship safe into port, argues a degree of intrepid deliberation, of address, and of steady valour, which can only be found in a great commander. To have brought in the fast sailing vessels of the squadron had been meritorious: but to have dropped astern, with these, and caused them to bear the blows, in protection of the slower vessels, whilst they made the best of the wind, and, thus, to have saved the whole, was doubly honourable. It was great and bold, and worthy the brother of our brave and long esteemed Marquis, whose high and well appreciated talents are so universally acknowledged, and so increased in splendor, by the humanity and benevolence of his nature. That two such distinguished comman-

ders, in the different branches of our service, should be found in the same family, is no less honourable to themselves than gratifying to their country. Of such men England has just cause to be proud. Contemplating their characters, I feel as a Briton, and partaking of my country's pride, could exclaim, Such are Albion's heroes—such her own legitimate sons !

My visit to Haslar hospital was in keeping with that to the dock-yard. Connected with our country's greatness, it called up a similar train of ideas, and I felt it an honor to England that so noble an institution should offer, to our brave tars, the comforts required in sickness. Too much cannot be done for our navy, nor can the provision for our sick and wounded defenders be too liberal ; they merit all their country can bestow. It has long been said, and, assuredly, with great correctness, that British sailors are not only a bold, but a peculiar race of beings : the fact is striking, and although it were extremely difficult to describe their singular character, yet may it be given in one short sentence, for—

they are a race of heroes! Each in his capacity, and as far as the power of an individual extends, is a decided hero. Of fear he only knows the name. Nothing so delights him as to be led into close combat; and, rather than be vanquished, he would submit to die at his gun. That such men should be liberally accommodated in their sufferings, must be congenial to the warmest wishes of every Briton; and to know that they are so, is consolatory to the feelings of all who are sensible of their value. It is due to their courage and bravery, and is demanded from their country's gratitude.

The Haslar is, admirably, calculated, as an asylum, for this important purpose. The establishment is splendid and liberal, and well worthy its object; and, in, so amply, providing for her brave and suffering defenders, England consults her best interests, while she proves herself to be mindful of the high duties of humanity.

The hospital, like many others of this island, from the grandeur of the edifice, might

be mistaken for a palace. It is built in an open, airy situation near the sea, at a short distance from Gosport. The sick are brought in boats, from the ships at Spithead, and, conveniently, received on shore at a landing place at the hospital. This great building, fitted for the accommodation of two thousand patients, together with houses for officers and the medical attendants, a chapel, a laboratory, a variety of offices, and thirty-eight acres of good pasture land, belonging to the institution, is enclosed within a high brick wall, with iron-gates, and a porter's lodge at the entrance, which no stranger is permitted to pass, without the leave of one of the resident lieutenants; or the porter first announcing his name to some officer of the establishment,

Much to the credit of the country this noble asylum, likewise, offers apartments for sick and wounded officers, where those who from convenience, or necessity, wish to avail themselves of the benefit of the institution, may find every aid and comfort their situation demands.

Nothing necessary to the establishment has been omitted. It is a distinct building, separated from all others, and, from possessing every essential within itself, is as complete as it is liberal, and does honor to the reign of George II. who has the merit of being its founder.

The establishment consists of a governor, (usually an old navy captain) three lieutenants, three physicians, three surgeons, two visiting apothecaries, a chaplain, an agent, a steward, and a dispenser, with assistants and servants in proportion to the number of sick. The hospital accommodates one thousand eight hundred patients, conveniently, but it sometimes happens that it receives as many as two thousand. This important establishment was founded in the year 1746, but was ten years before it was completed, the patients not being admitted until the year 1756. The expenditure, as may be expected, from the nature of the institution, differs very widely in different years, varying from 10,000*l.* to upwards of 30,000*l.* per annum.

A plan has lately been formed for establishing a military hospital, likewise, in this neighbourhood, for the accommodation of our sick and wounded soldiers. You will join me, I have no doubt, in wishing that it may be attended with every possible success, and that it may prove equally useful to our army, as the Haslar to the navy. The building is already commenced, at Gosport, and it is expected to be in readiness for the reception of patients next year, or, at the latest, the year following.

At the Haslar, a high degree of order and arrangement prevails, and all the regulations of the establishment are duly observed. The hospital is clean, well ventilated, and well conducted ; and the benefit, intended, is regularly and correctly administered.

But great and liberal as is the relief held out, to the sick, by this splendid institution, we are not to contemplate it in the limited view of a mere asylum for those who are, immediately, suffering. Its object is

far more extensive. It may be said to be the depôt—the great and general receptacle of maritime sickness, and the best guardian of our navy; for it not only offers a home to the sick, but holds out the means of keeping disease and infection from our fleets. Every ship lying in harbour, or upon going out to sea, has the privilege of sending any of the sailors who may chance to be ill, to the *Haf-lar*; a regulation founded in wisdom, and fraught with great and manifold advantages; for, not only are the sick more speedily recovered, but, by this excellent arrangement, every ship is made free from disease, and contagion is prevented; or, if it should already exist, is kept from spreading through the vessel, or extending its direful effects to the fleet. Hence, from the extensive accommodation of this admirable institution, and from the strict rules of cleanliness and ventilation, which are now observed on board the ships, all apprehension is removed of great and general sickness in our navy.

Dr. Lind, the senior physician at the *Haf-lar*, politely offered his services, as guide and

conductor to us, in our round at the hospital, and we were much gratified in this opportunity of becoming known to him. But few men could be found so well calculated for the situation and appointment he holds. The doctor is not only a man of professional talents, but of great accuracy and systematic arrangement. He, very obligingly, communicated to us much information respecting the interior œconomy of hospitals; and, from his remarks, we collected many useful hints, of which we hope to avail ourselves on service. From a person of such extensive experience, you may believe, that every word was treasured, and we shall be happy in the opportunity of applying his observations to the benefit of the sick in our military hospitals.

In our walk through the Haflar, a man, apparently a convalescent, came up to me, in one of the fever wards, and, accosting me in a firm tone of voice, without any preface, desired me to “take care of my pockets.” I heard him, without much surprise, supposing him to be a convalescent in the delirium of

fever ; when he quickly rejoined, “ take care of your pockets—for I’m a d——ble thief.” This confirmed me in the idea suggested by his first address : but I was soon undeceived by the information that he was “ *a bounty-man,*” sent by one of the parishes, as a part of the levy required to complete the manning of the navy ; the parish officers having, thus, availed themselves of the opportunity of relieving the parish from an unfortunate object, who had long been a burthen to them, from being in a state of insanity. But too many, it is to be feared, have sought to fulfil the act by serving their country with such-like contributions.

I mentioned the ramparts as another object of our attention. These form an agreeable relief to the general heaviness of the town, by affording a lively and extensive view of the environs, including the sea, the Isle of Wight, and the Southampton river, with the fleets at Spithead and St. Helen’s.

The works of a fortified town, being considerably elevated, usually form a pleasant

promenade, and offer a commanding view of the country adjoining. Could the mind divest itself of all idea of the unhappy cause which renders such barriers necessary, they might be regarded as the ornamental improvement of the place : but, too commonly, gloomy reflections connect with them, from the contemplation of the cruel ferocity of our nature, which requires that such defence should be opposed to those of our own species, and prevents mankind from associating in the peaceful harmony of one great family. That men should need to be thus protected against each other, is a melancholy reflection, and almost amounts to a contradiction of all the boasted advantages of our reasoning faculty. The wild beasts of the forest war, only, from the calls of appetite, and even under the powerful impulse of hunger, devour not those of their own species—but man ! savage man ! who boasts the exclusive faculty of reason, employs his talents to the destruction of his fellow beings, and without even the plea of the beast of prey—that nature impels him to it by the appetite she has given him.

The fortifications of Portsmouth have been, lately, extended to the part called Portsea, by which they have assumed a more formidable aspect ; and although they are, even yet, more calculated to guard against a surprise, than to withstand the regular attack of a besieging army ; still, from its fosses, its bastions, and its angles, this place wears more the appearance of a, regularly, fortified town, than any other of our island. But, happily, for England, she has been fortified by a greater master than Vauban, Colbert, or any other engineer of modern or ancient celebrity. The trident of *old Neptune* has dug a deep fosse around her, which Britons, of the present day, know how to guard, as their best defence, against all the sanguinary hordes of our species.

LETTER VI.

Author receives instructions to proceed to Cork in the Bridgewater transport. Is offered an exchange from the St. Domingo to the Leeward Island staff. Embarkation of troops. Tempestuous scenery at Portsmouth. Author visits the Circus. Adventure of a British tar at this theatre. Author lodges at the Widow Butler's. Is led into religious controversy with his hostess. Obtains her blessing, by prescribing a simple food for her children.

Portsmouth, October, 28. 1795

STILL at Portsmouth, and the Ulysses not yet come round from the Thames! Henderson and myself have received orders not to wait longer, but to repair, immediately, on board the Bridgewater transport, and proceed to Cork. Of this vessel we do not hear the most happy report. She is very old, and we cannot fancy her so safe as the Ulysses. We, likewise, hear that she is, already, much crowded with passengers, and that we have no prospect of obtaining, even, a tolerable birth on board. But as I before remarked to

you, I am prepared for all I may have to encounter, and resolved to meet whatever happens *sans me plaindre*.

Master has not received instructions to accompany us, and we lament the prospect of being so soon deprived of his society. But we have some hope, that he may, again, join us at Cork. Possibly he may follow us in the *Ulysses*, and have the satisfaction of not being separated from his baggage.

You will learn with surprize that, what I, some time ago, fought, in vain, is now offered to my acceptance. One of the physicians of the Leeward Island staff, wishing to go to St. Domingo, it has been proposed to me to make an exchange, giving him my appointment, and taking his. But my arrangements are now fixed. I have a better knowledge of things connecting with the service on which we are destined, and my baggage is, already, on board a vessel bound for St. Domingo:—if, therefore, my destination be altered, I can only know it officially, for

circumstances no longer prompt me to a voluntary exchange.

Some troops were embarked yesterday, from this place. The weather was rough and unfavorable. Such indeed has it, constantly, been, since our arrival at Portsmouth,—always stormy, and, at times, tempestuous. From this state of the weather we have had the opportunity of seeing this great maritime port to much advantage; a degree of grandeur being added to the scenery, which, in a more tranquil season, had not existed. The general movement and activity have been, necessarily, increased. We have heard the deep roaring of the billows, and have listened to the howling of the wind, and the beating of the storm among the shipping; the troubled waves have dashed, in heavy seas, upon the land, or broke, with violence, against the rampart-walls; boats and ships have been set adrift, others have been driven from their anchors and cast on shore; and that degree of the terrific, necessary to the sublime, has prevailed. But sublime and grand as it may

have appeared, you will believe that, "as we are so soon to be placed at the mercy of the restless and turbulent waters, the ideas excited, by this scenery, have not been of the most happy nature.

A sort of relief to the dull round of Portsmouth has, lately, presented itself, in a company of equestrians, who have opened a circus, or theatre for horsemanship, in the hope of amusing the public, at more of profit than the bare support of the riders and their horses. But, in this expectation, it seems probable, they may be disappointed, especially, if their visit should be at all protracted.

To have disregarded this only amusement of the place had been a great neglect : but a single visit has exhausted all our curiosity. Of the spectators, no small proportion consisted of sailors, (drunk or sober,) and the *lovely* Cyprians I have before described to you. The low buffoonery of the clown, you may believe, was suited to his audience, and, certainly, it was coarse and vulgar as, even, Portsmouth might desire.

Perhaps I might say that the best part of the entertainment proceeded from a jolly tar, in a fit of mirth, letting himself down from the gallery, to snatch off the fool's cap,—which he put upon his own head, and, usurping the place and character of the clown, desired him to “*budge*,” for he was “*too great a fool to keep the deck*.” This introduced a very ludicrous scene between Jack and the clown. The clown met the adventure as mere sailor's fun, bore it patiently, and, in his own way, endeavoured to turn it to the amusement of the audience: while Jack made many hits of humor and drollery, and seemed not, altogether, unworthy of the cap. For some time they maintained a very ridiculous and sportive contest, who should wear it, Jack repelling the rough wit and sarcasm of the clown with considerable effect. But, at length, the latter observing that “*two fools*” were “*too much for so genteel an audience*,” abruptly seized the cap from the head of the merry tar, and poor Jack, thus deprived of necromantic influence, reeled off the stage, a mere drunken sailor, stammering, by way of apology, “*D..d.. dammee, ladies and g...gentlemen, I'm o...b...b...*”

liged to strike, for t'other's the b...b...biggest fool."

From the time of our leaving the Fountain inn I have lodged at the house of a widow, who proves to be a very strict disciple of the zealous and bigotted Whitfield. This poor woman has several children, who are brought up in all the scrupulous tenets of their sect; and, it being a part of the system to seek profelytes, I am, sometimes, in my occasional conferences, betrayed into theological discussions with my puritanical hostess. Most commonly they turn upon the hallowed doctrine of predestination; when the scriptures are turned, and twisted, and tortured, and construed, and misconstrued, in a variety of ways, and in all the trite language, and ready quotation of the sect, to exemplify the certitude of this great and universal principle; which, to minds less biassed, would only seem to plead an excuse for all the bad passions of man, while it impeached the justice of a benevolent, all-wise, and all-merciful ruler.

But, as I, always, hold religion sacred, and

venerate true devotion, under all the various forms assumed by every class of its votaries, however misled, with regard to particular tenets, I, so far, subscribe to the merit of the widow's arguments as to quit the topic in perfect harmony; although less impressed with the great truths, she so fervently urges, than her zeal for the good cause would lead her to wish.

I feel, however, the satisfaction of having obtained this poor woman's esteem and gratitude; although, by a circumstance less spiritual than religious observance;—a concern, indeed, wholly temporal, for it regards, simply, the body's support! Finding that she was often at a loss to contrive a convenient and economical dinner for her little brood, I hinted to her the great utility of rice. In reply to which she remarked, that she did often make them *rice-puddings*, but that they were very expensive, and required much time and trouble in preparing. She did not seem to have any idea that rice, *simply boiled*, could be eaten, or that it could be regarded as food, without the admixture of eggs, sugar, milk,

and spices ; and, when I assured her that *plain rice* merely put into a bag and boiled, made a very wholesome and nourishing diet, she smiled, and expressed strong doubts of the fact : therefore, in order to convince her, I desired that she would procure some rice that day for the children's dinner, and let me instruct her how to prepare it. She did so, with a sort of reluctance, believing that it could not be good,—not eatable ! I repeated my assurances that she would find it an important article of diet, adding, that it was *predestined* for her children to use it as a principal part of their food.—This was a close specimen of her own logic, and a little staggered her : but she could not “ tell by anticipation what was predestined. Whatever was would come to pass.” This, she believed, never could. She knew not what was to be ; but, like the most zealous of the sect, reserved herself to judge the case of pre-ordination by the event.

At dinner-time the rice appeared, and, fortunately, it was well boiled. I desired them to mix with it some moist sugar and a small

piece of butter, and, giving some of it to the children, begged of the mother to leave it to them to decide whether the predestination I had foretold was not about to be fulfilled. They ate up, eagerly, what was given them, and asked for more. The poor woman, likewise, partook of it herself, and, to her great surprise, found it to be, not only a good and wholesome food, but very palatable. A scene of joy and happiness succeeded, which I witnessed with the most heartfelt satisfaction ; and I could not but take to myself the merit of having done a good action :—although it was but the humble one of prescribing *a pudding* to a poor widow, and her tender babes !

The dear little ones clapped their hands, and, in lisping accents, told their joy ; while the thankful parent relieved a heart, loaded with gratitude, by expressing a multitude of acknowledgments, and praying Heaven, for ever, to bless me. “ Now,” said she, “ I can never be at a loss for a pleasant, or a plentiful meal, for my poor children :” and, on my putting to her the question regarding my prediction, she replied, that she was not only

fully convinced of the truth of it, but that she further believed it had been predestined by the Almighty; that I should be sent, to lodge in her house, to instruct her how to provide, for her infants, a fit and palatable food, which, at all times, she might be able to procure.— She devoutly offered thanks to Heaven, on this happy event, which, she declared, brought, to herself and children, a degree of comfort, and of plenty, she had not dared to expect.

If I at all know your heart, my friend, however trivial it shall seem to some, this will not be regarded, by you, as, merely, an idle anecdote. You will envy me the blessing of the widow Butler, and the smiles of her innocent babes.

LETTER VII.

Author goes to Spithead and St. Helen's with Dr. Henderson, in search of the Bridgewater transport. They return to Portsmouth unsuccessful. Violent storm on the 29th of October. Its effect upon the minds of the common people. Fleets detained by bad weather, and contrary winds. Suggestion that an approaching peace may prevent the expedition from proceeding to its destination. Credulity of a hypochondriac lady, who asked a celebrated empiric to tell her the name of her malady.

Portsmouth, October, 31. 1755

YOU, no doubt, expected that my next letter would be addressed to you from Cork, and will be surprized to find that I am still at Portsmouth:—but this is among the numberless uncertainties of my present calling.

Upon receiving our instructions to repair on board the Bridgewater, Dr. Henderson and myself took a boat and went off to Spithead, in the intention of joining her, but, after sailing and rowing, amidst the fleets, there, and at St. Helen's, throughout, nearly, the whole

of the day, we, at last, returned without being able to find our Ship.

We hailed a great number of vessels with inquiries, but could not obtain any accurate tidings of the Bridgewater. One had no knowledge of her whatever ;—another knew her, but could not tell where she lay ;—a third had never heard her name. Some had seen her, but said she had shifted her birth ;—some thought she had dropped down to St. Helen's ;—some believed she lay at the Motherbank,—and others understood that she had failed. Amidst all these contradictory reports we could neither find the ship, nor learn any certain intelligence respecting her : hence, after a most tiresome and fatiguing round, and consuming nearly a whole day in quest of the Bridgewater, it only remained to us to return to Portsmouth, and, again, wait for further orders.

Previous to going into the boat we had been informed at the Transport-Office, that the vessel, we inquired for, had received instructions to sail without delay : it is there-

fore probable, that she might be getting under weigh at the very moment we went off in search of her. The following morning we learned that she had, actually, failed for Cork.

After the account I gave you, in my last letter, regarding this ship, you will not imagine that our disappointment was very afflicting;—and I, candidly, confess that my greatest uneasiness, upon the occasion, proceeded from our sickening tour in the boat. The revived hope of seeing the *Ulysses*, and the prospect of regaining the society of our friend Master, held out to us more than a compensation for our toil. In the latter expectation we were speedily gratified; but the satisfaction of greeting the *Ulysses* still remains in anticipation.

The weather continues to be very unsettled. It has been stormy and tempestuous beyond all that is usual, even, at the roughest season of the year. On the 29th instant it blew a perfect hurricane,—like what we read of as, sometimes, happening in other countries,

but unlike all that we are accustomed to witness in England. Had the fleet been at sea something very disastrous would, probably, have befallen it; but as the weather has so long been stormy, we hope that the boisterous heavens will have exhausted themselves before the expedition fails.

Between ten and eleven o'clock, on the morning of the 29th, a tremendous gale began to blow. The sky blackened. The tumid clouds rolled in heavy masses, darting forth quick lightning, followed by loud bursts of thunder. The tearing gusts of wind brought with them violent showers of hail, and deluging torrents of rain. The whole elements seemed to be moved in one convulsive effort. The vivid lightning traced its path in broad and fiery flashes, and the terrific thunder instantly followed, as if raging to overtake them. At one instant it rolled in oppressed and convulsive sound, seeming to struggle against some great impediment that confined it to the clouds, and, at the next, it burst forth, in full explosion, as though a match had, suddenly, fired the whole ordnance

of heaven. Hailstones, of uncommon magnitude, beat down with a force and rapidity, as if contending which should first reach the earth: and scarcely had they fallen, before the sweeping violence of the wind forced them into heaps like deep-drifted snow ; in which state they remained for hours after the storm ; notwithstanding the heavy torrents of rain which followed them.

The houses were shaken, to a dangerous degree, by the excessive force of the tempest. The loud ocean rolled in tremendous seas, and broke, in ruptured mountains, on the shore. Many of the ships were driven from their anchors ; some were dismasted ; others cast away ; and boats, set loose by the storm, were swallowed up by the troubled waters, and afterwards vomited, by the expelling throes of the sea, upon dry land.

The hollow sound of the wind, and the heavy beatings of the hail and rain, through the thick forest of shipping lying in the harbour, together with the tremendous dashings of the sea, and the troubled motion of the

vessels, upon its restless surface, all combined to render the scene greatly awful ; but too high a degree of the terrific was intermixed with it, for the spectator to regard its grandeur and sublimity in quiet contemplation.—To convey any just idea of it would require the pen of a Milton, or a Shakespeare.

Great and general alarm prevailed, especially among the lower orders of people ; in whose minds a fearful association was excited, which carried them, infinitely, beyond the probable injuries to be expected. They ran, trembling, into the remotest corners of their houses, uttering loud bewailings, and fearing that some dreadful visitation of the Almighty was upon them, and that He, in his wrath, was about to punish their sins, by the destruction of the town, and its wicked inhabitants. Nothing was heard but the howlings of the tempest. In all other respects a dread stillness reigned. No living thing was seen upon the streets ; and all around seemed hushed in the silent pause of consternation.

When the violence of the storm had a little abated, and the rays of light began to issue through the broken clouds, the trembling multitude ventured forth, and, assembling in groups at the door-ways, relieved their apprehensions by relating them to each other, in the restored comfort of mutual intercourse. At this moment I could not but remark the striking effect of that great and leading feature of our nature,—the social principle. Had these people remained alone, hidden in the corners of their houses, their sense of alarm had, probably, continued much longer; but they derived manifest relief from communicating with each other; and the very act of relating their fears insensibly dispelled them.

Having much curiosity to hear their remarks, and to observe their expressions of terror, I mixed with these associated groups, and found that their apprehensions had been great and various. Some had magnified the storm into an earthquake, sent to destroy them. Others had believed it to be a hurricane, which

would bury them in the ruins of the town. Many had imagined they were to be swallowed up by the sea, which threatened the place in huge and loud-roaring billows. Some, widening their fears to the whole extent of our island, considered the awful scene as an omen to the Parliament (which was to meet this day), to warn them against persisting in a "cruel and bloody war;" others, looking to the immense fleets preparing for our expeditions, believed the whole about to be swallowed up, because their employment was wicked; and all seemed to regard the tempest as a scourge, intended to punish the vices, and chastise the follies of mankind.

Whilst every one contemplated the event as of vast and mighty import, busy imagination had tortured their individual fears into a thousand forms. One worthy dame had felt the earth shake under her; another saw the whole street move; the olfactories of a third had perceived sulphureous fumes issuing from below, and some had even heard the church and other buildings falling into the opened

chasms, and crashing amidst the shattered bowels of the earth. These secret terrors, you will believe, subsided with the storm; yet all, in soberest reason, vowed they had never known the like before.

The injuries done were less than might have been expected. Some of the ships and boats necessarily suffered; a few houses were unroofed; and, amidst the devastation, the windmill, at Gosport, was blown to the ground. It was, at first, said that many lives were lost,—but, happily, we do not find this report confirmed.

The West-India fleet, the fleet for Gibraltar, and the Channel fleet, are all detained by tempestuous weather and contrary winds; and there are some among us who, from the pacific tendency of the King's speech, and other circumstances, which they imagine to be favorable, would persuade themselves that our great expedition will never fail; or, that, if it should get under weigh, negotiations for peace will prevent it from reaching the West-

Indies. I dare not hazard an opinion upon this subject. What say you politicians of London respecting it?

But I have something to tell you more amusing than storms, and fleets, and troubled seas. You will remember our occasional conversations respecting the numberless perils and dangers that derive, to the public, from the license afforded, in this country, to every idle and impudent boaster of empirical remedies for the cure of disease; and, without any violent surprize, you will place the following fact among the host of absurdities which daily meet your eye and your ear.

A physician, whom I had the pleasure of conversing with yesterday evening, was, some time ago, called to visit a patient who was, wretchedly, afflicted with hypochondriasis. She had long been under the care of the solidant and celebrated *Doctor*——and had swallowed of his all-healing, all-restoring, all-strengthening, and never-failing cordial as much as had cost her *two-and-twenty* guineas. Still she was more and more low, dyspeptic,

and hypp'd ; and her poor flatulent stomach was, cruelly, annoyed with the repeated potions of this *infallible* specific. At length, after enduring the *doctor*, and his remedy, through a most tedious trial, and finding no relief, she grew impatient to know, decidedly, the nature of her malady, and, at one of her visits to the *doctor*, pointedly importuned him to tell her the *real and true* name of her disease : when this *great* man, finding that his patient was urgent, and that he was unable, any longer, to evade the question, assumed a dignified and important air, and, with *great* gravity, made known to her his *great* opinion that she had - - - - -
 “ a great fire in the bones ! ” The poor burning lady, in all fullness of faith, gave credit to the fiery tale, and, in the true sense of a hypochondriac believer, felt that not only her bones, but her whole frame was rapidly consuming. Unhappily for *the doctor*, she soon after discovered that taking his never-failing balsam was only adding fuel to her fire ; and, at last, upon turning to the newspapers she found that, in the long list of maladies to be cured by this omnipotent remedy, the *doctor*,

alas! had forgot to promise that it should extinguish the "fire in the bones;" upon which she abandoned both cordial and *doctor*, and applied for relief to the physician, who amused us with the history of the case.

LETTER VIII.

Author and his colleagues joined by Dr. Cleghorn. Doctors Master, Cleghorn, and the author contemporaries at Edinburgh, and fellow-pupils of Guy's and St. Thomas's. Author and his comrades, joined by Mr. Nicholl, again visit the Dock-yard, Haslar Hospital, and Forton Prison. Vicissitudes of war exemplified in the case of a French prisoner.

Portsmouth, Nov. 8. 1796

OUT of evil, it is said, sometimes springeth good : and I feel assured that you will agree with me, in considering the adage verified, when I tell you, that the repeated delays to which we have been subjected have proved the means of completing our party, by converting our harmonious trio into a still more social quartette :—a circumstance which has happened from our being joined by Dr. Cleghorn, who is now arrived, at this place, on his way to join the St. Domingo hospital staff. He is a pleasant, well-informed man, and of good professional abilities ;—is brother to the professor of anatomy at the University

of Dublin, and nephew to the celebrated author on the diseases of Minorca. His society is a great acquisition to us, and we are much gratified in having such an agreeable addition to our party. We now look, more anxiously than ever, to the arrival of the *Ulysses*, in the hope of being allowed to establish a pleasant mess for the voyage.

On the day of Dr. Cleghorn's arrival at Portsmouth, it happened that he met me walking in the street, when, without any introduction, he directly accosted me by name; and, on my seeming surprized, at being so addressed by a stranger, he remarked that my face was very familiar to him, from having seen me often at the classes in Edinburgh: upon a further eclaircissement, it proves that Master, Cleghorn, and myself were cotemporaries, though not acquainted, at Edinburgh; and that we were all pupils at Guy's and St. Thomas's in London. We are now met again, under circumstances calculated to create a durable intimacy, and we hope to remain associated, until the calls of service shall require our unwilling separation.

I have also the pleasure of finding myself further relieved from the dulness of Portsmouth, by the society of my friend Mr. Nicholl, who is just arrived here, in order to proceed to the West Indies, with the expedition, but, on a much pleasanter service than ourselves, viz. that of taking possession of some estates, lately left him as a legacy, in the island of St. Vincent ; and from which he has the prospect of obtaining an income of several thousands per annum.

With our newly-arrived friends we have repeated our visits to the Dock-yard, the Hospital, and the Forton Prison. The wounded and shattered Tigre again arrested our attention. We also went on board the Bellerophon, and an immense ship now building, which is intended to carry upwards of a hundred guns.

At the prison we met with a striking example of the numerous and sudden vicissitudes to which persons are liable, who are exposed to the hazardous chances of war. Observing among the prisoners, an officer

who had lost his right arm, we were led to ask some questions respecting him, when we learned that he was the very lieutenant who took possession of our ship of war the *Alexander*, at the time she fell into the hands of the French ; and that he had, afterwards, been taken in one of the ships captured by Lord Bridport's fleet, and had lost his arm in the action. Thus the man, who, but a short time ago, rejoiced in victory, is now humbled by defeat, and has the sad mortification of being confined a prisoner, with the loss of a most important limb, and the melancholy prospect of being a cripple throughout the remainder of his life.

LETTER IX.

Author and his comrades embark on board the Ulysses at Spithead. Report of the expedition being about to sail. Consequent hurry and confusion. Scramble for provisions. Author and his comrades buy a giblet pie upon the street, hot from the oven. Embarkation scene at Portsmouth. Author's account of having witnessed a similar scene at Geneva, but of a nature and extent far more afflicting. Conduct of an emigrant marquis upon that occasion. Reception of the author and his comrades on board the Ulysses. Proceedings of the first night on board.

Spithead, Nov. 12. 1795

GREETINGS from the Ulysses! Our suspense is, at length, relieved. The day after I last wrote to you, our long looked for Ulysses arrived, with a fleet from the Downs, and yesterday, Henderson, Master, Cleghorn, and myself, took our births on board, finding Master's and my baggage stowed in great safety.

We left Portsmouth in a grand scene of hurry and confusion, in consequence of it being reported, on the arrival of the fleet

from the Downs, that every ship, belonging to the expedition, was to sail, without further delay; those of the Leward island division for Barbadoes, and those of the St. Domingo division for Cork. The transports, with troops from Southampton, happening to drop down the river at the same time, to rendezvous at the Motherbank and Spithead, seemed to confirm the report; and suddenly, all was converted into extreme hurry and activity. Multitudes, both from the newly arrived ships, and those which had been long waiting, thronged on shore to purchase provisions and stores, to complete their stock for the voyage. Many, who had passed their hours of suspense in the town, had also their marketings to make; and hence the demand becoming, suddenly, greater than the supply, it introduced all the confusion of a general scramble. Each seized upon whatever provisions he could find, asking no questions, but paying any money that was demanded.

Not aware of the tumultuous pressure of such a moment, and considering ours to be only a short passage, we had, purposely, de-

layed purchasing our meat, bread, and other fresh provisions, until we should be certain that the ship, in which we were to make the voyage, was arrived. But, should we proceed to sea, immediately, and the voyage be at all protracted, we shall be reduced, by this neglect, to salt food, and the ship's allowance; for, in the general scramble, we were unable to obtain what we wished, and were compelled to repair on board with a very deficient supply.

All the butchers' and bakers' shops were quickly emptied. Not a loaf, nor a bit of meat, not even a carrot, nor a cabbage remained, and many went empty away. Neither porters nor servants were required, but every one, who was successful enough to put his hand upon any provisions, gladly became the bearer of his own load. To shew you the extremity to which we were reduced, I may tell you that our party stopped a man, upon the street, who was carrying home a large giblet pie, hot from the oven, which we tempted him to let us take on board, by offering, for the pie and the dish, more than

double their value—or indeed any money he might demand.

To an unconcerned spectator it must have been a most ludicrous and diverting scene, and such as might have afforded full scope to the all-animating pencil of Hogarth. We were too intimately associated in what was passing, to view it only with an eye of amusement. Still I could not but remark the oddity of the assemblage, and the varied expression of countenance, as actuated by hope, joy, disappointment, hurry, and anxiety. Military and naval officers, passengers, servants, soldiers, sailors, boys, women, and negroes, all crowded together upon the streets, formed one heterogeneous mass—one great and motley groupe, of which every part was in busy motion—each person feeling the apprehension of being left behind.

From the multitudes of anxious heavy-laden individuals who were seen running with their burdens down to the boats, and scrambling to embark, it might have appeared to a stranger, that the inhabitants of Portsmouth

were making one great effort to carry off all the provisions, stores, and furniture of the town, previous to evacuating it to the possession of an enemy. One hurried off with legs and shoulders of mutton, another with half a sheep, a third with a huge piece of beef, and others with different joints of veal or pork. Here was a man running with a cheese, there one with a sugar-loaf. Others were scampering away loaded with rice, or papers of groceries. Some ran off with bags of bread, some with baskets of greens, potatoes, carrots, turnips, and the like. Many were seen bending under heavy bundles of clothes, wet from the wash; others loaded with camp-stools, deal boxes, sea-coffers, pewter utensils, and various other kinds of stores; and, amidst the throng, ourselves with the smoking giblet pie, and such other provisions as we had been able to procure. Every one was upon the alert. Necessity made all industrious, and, without any idle or scrupulous objections, each was glad to minister to his own wants.

Intermixed with the business of this

anxious scene, were many other circumstances which increased the general crowd and confusion of the picture ; such as multitudes pressing into, and overflowing the shops—people running against, or tumbling over each other upon the streets—loud disputes and quarrelling—the sadness of parting—greetings of friends, unexpectedly met, and as suddenly about to separate—sailors quitting their trulls — drunkards reeling — boatmen wrangling—boats overloaded or upset—the tide beating in heavy sprays upon the shore—persons running and hurrying in every direction, for something new, or something forgot—some cursing the boatmen for not pushing off with more speed, and others beseeching and imploring them to stop a minute longer.

Such was the state in which we left Portsmouth, after a residence of three weeks, during which time we had regarded it as a dull inanimate place ; but the change was sudden, and will be only transient : the hurry and tumult will vanish with the sailing of the fleet, and the town will relapse into its tran-

quill fameness, until the recurrence of a similar occasion.

This troubled moment of scramble and confusion called to my remembrance a scene, not unlike it, but upon a far greater scale, which I had witnessed at Geneva, at the time when the French general Montesquiou, after taking the town of Chamberry, marched his army against that city. This was a period of uncommon interest, and it has stamped an indelible impression upon my mind. Having made a long tour through Holland, the Pays-bas, Germany, Switzerland, and Savoy, my brother and sister, and myself had proposed making the vicinity of Geneva our resting-place, during the autumn months, and, with this view, we had taken up our residence at the village of Copet, near that city, in a cottage, built upon the very brink of its enchanting lake.

From our windows we, at once, commanded, perhaps the grandest landscape, and the sublimest picture in nature. An expanse of water thirty-six miles in length, six in breadth,

and as bright as crystal, was immediately before us. Near to us, at the upper extremity of this fine sheet of water, appeared the city of Geneva, encompassing the end of the lake in semilunar form. Upon its sides were seen many villages, towns, and country villas, distributed amidst verdant fields, or luxuriant vineyards. At the distance of a few miles, on the left shore, was the celebrated town of Lausanne, with the towering mountains of Jura, which divide Switzerland from France; and before us, on the opposite coast of the lake, rose the gigantic Alps of Savoy, proudly elevating themselves, in three vast ranges, aspiring to the very skies; and scarcely leaving a space between the earth and heaven. The first rise, gradually, behind the beautiful villas and vineyards bordering the lake, and are covered, to the top, with cattle and green herbage; those of the second range, tower above these, and appear, at the distance of from ten to twenty miles, in rugged pyramids of naked rock; and the most remote, which crown all the others, are seen above the clouds, at the distance of forty or fifty

miles, appearing in huge summits of ice and snow.

Here we had hoped to sojourn during the autumn, enjoying these finest scenes of nature, placed, as it were, beyond the broils of a disordered world: but it was not permitted us, quietly to lull in nature's lap, or, thus, to rest embosomed in her softest couch. Too soon wide-spreading violation reached this peaceful retreat, and the maniacal fever of change, which shook the globe, suffered not this heavenly spot to escape.

Under the protection of a neutral republic, and believing themselves secure in this soul-enchanting retirement, many of the unhappy and persecuted emigrants, from France, had taken refuge in this most delightful neighbourhood, hoping to rest in quietness, and, peacefully, deplore their country's woes; but the infectious revolution, which now spreads its poison abroad, respects neither persons nor places. No establishment, however ancient or sacred, is secure against its pestiferous in-

fluence. It rages wide and wild, and, like a ferocious beast of prey, seems only eager to devour and destroy.

At an early hour of the morning, long previous to the usual moment of persons being allowed to enter the city, crowds of distressed and terror-struck emigrants, flying from the adjacent country, thronged to the Chamberry gate, to seek protection within the walls, reporting that the French army had seized the town of Chamberry, and was proceeding against Geneva.

The news was unexpected as alarming, and the sudden appraisal introduced a scene of terror and confusion not to be described. An universal consternation prevailed. The emigrants expected to be massacred if they fell into the hands of their implacable foes; and the aristocratic party of the inhabitants looked to nothing but plunder, indignity, and insult.

A general council was called, and it was resolved to demand the Swiss subsidy of

troops to defend the city. In the mean time several of the senators deemed it prudent to embark such of their property as could be conveniently moved; and the whole body of emigrants hastened, without delay, to seek their safety in the more independent territory of Switzerland. Of the inhabitants also, great numbers saw no security but in quitting the town; and many, who remained, held it prudent to send away their wives and families.

The scene which followed was not unlike what we have, lately, witnessed at Portsmouth, but more general, and of a nature infinitely more afflicting. Indeed the sudden panic that overspread the place, together with the alarm and confusion of the emigrants, begat a day of horror and distress, which might have drawn compassion even from the tiger-hearts of those who caused it.

Penetrated with every fearful apprehension, multitudes abandoned their property, and ran from the city to escape, only, with their lives; regardless whither they wandered, or

what path they took, so it but led to a place of safety. Others taking what property they could with them, crowded into boats upon the lake, in order to proceed, by water, to the Cantons of Switzerland. Many hurried away on horseback, others in coaches, carts, waggons, or any sort of conveyance they could find. Every species of carriage, of whatever shape or structure, was seized and driven away with more than a double load.

Unhappily a new source of distress arose, from an obstacle which the terrified multitude had not anticipated. The little town of Verfoy, situated upon the western border of the lake, is within the territory of France, and the frightened multitude, in pursuing the public route to Switzerland, which leads through this place, met with guards of military "levellers" stationed upon the streets, and upon different parts of the road, who stopped every person, and every carriage, under pretence of searching for emigrant, or contraband property. But these new comptrollers of the road—this new species of highway robbers, sanctioned by that odious badge of *liberty*, the

national uniform, having, in compliance with the system and principle of the revolution, subdued all the antiquated prejudices of conscience, stole and plundered without reserve. The law of force being their only rule of justice, they found no difficulty in attaching the term "*émigré*" to whatever they desired to possess. If emigrant property was found, it was tossed out upon the open road; the packages emptied, and whatever was valuable taken away: and those persons who were discovered to be emigrants, were, further, robbed of their shoe-buckles, knee-buckles, ear-rings, and the like, and subjected to every low and degrading insult that could aggravate their misfortune, or augment the distress of their retreat. For more than a mile, between Verfoy and Geneva, the road was strewed with interrupted carriages—with trunks, boxes, imperials, and other packages, exposed to the rough examination, and the plunder of these, *foi-disuns*, sons of *freedom*. Whole trains of carriages were thus detained for many hours, and others were not suffered to proceed.

Multitudes of persons hearing of the rude

inspection to which those in advance were subjected, returned, before they reached the first station of French troops, hoping to make their escape, with less difficulty, by water. But in this they were not less unhappy, for the freedom of the lake was also violated. The tri-coloured marauders of Versoy, observing a crowd moving upon the water, sent out four boats, and stationed them across the lake, with instructions to intercept every vessel that should attempt to pass; and interruption and plunder prevailed, equally, upon the land and the water.

The whole town was now at the highest point of distress; boats, carriages, and vehicles of every description were crowding back, both from the road, and the lake; the French army was said to be actually on its march from Chamberry; and, still worse, from the democratic part of the citizens being dissatisfied with the decision of the council, respecting the Swiss troops and the defence of the city, the place was threatened with intestine commotion. No one felt safe in the town, yet none could escape from it, without injury or

insult.—The moment was awful as perilous. Consternation was seated upon every brow. The streets were crowded with parties, each suspecting the other's designs; and from the more violent and disorderly calling aloud, "Point de Suiffes—Point de Suiffes," it was to be apprehended that some dreadful convulsion might ensue.

In this alarming state of the city the council was again assembled, and, in order to appease the discontented, it was resolved that some step should be taken to evince the amicable disposition of the government of Geneva, towards the republic of France. A decree was accordingly passed, that the French resident at Geneva, who had not been acknowledged since the memorable 10th of August, should be recognised, as envoy of the French republic, and that he should be requested to proceed to general Montesquiou, commanding the French army, with assurances of friendship from the council and people of Geneva.

This, in some degree, quieted the dissatis-

fied citizens : but “ Point de Suiffes—Point de Suiffes,” continued to be occasionally heard. The council, however, did not abandon the decree of calling in the Swiss levy, but reserved all further proceedings, until they should receive the answer of general Montefquiou, to the friendly communication conveyed through the medium of the French resident.

In the mean time, as the whole town felt indignant on account of the freedom of the lake being infringed, an armed vessel was dispatched to assert the rights of the state of Geneva ; and to insist upon the free and uninterrupted passage of all vessels going from the city. The remonstrance succeeded, and no further obstacle being opposed, every boat, barge, and skiff—every vessel that could carry an oar or a sail, was, immediately, employed, and the general hurry and confusion were tenfold increased. Anxious multitudes thronged on board, and the crowded boats were in danger of being upset, or sunk to the bottom.

From the distress and extreme peril which intermixed with, and augmented the confusion

of this disastrous period, it was rendered highly afflicting. Not only the peace and property, but the lives of numbers were at hazard. To go off in the boats, crowded as they were, was extremely dangerous; but still greater peril awaited longer delay. Hence, at all risks, those who could possibly find place, ventured themselves afloat, and, quickly, we saw, from our window, as it were, a whole town moving upon the water.

Among the crowd that appeared before the city gates early in the morning, as well as among those who left their homes, to escape from the town, were groupes of the various descriptions of young and old, male and female, rich and poor, polished and vulgar, all confounded, pell-mell, together. Acting from the sudden impulse of terror, many thought only of the safety of their persons; and some, in their haste and anxiety to escape, ran off without hats or shoes—some without caps or bonnets. Few, indeed, were enough collected to regard either propriety or ornament of dress. The countenances of all bespoke more important concern; but their

feelings were differently depicted, and so great was the motley variety of the throng, that had the occasion been less painful, the whole scene might have appeared as a ludicrous spectacle. But all the circumstances connecting with it, were so serious and afflict-ing, that every feeling of levity, which might have arisen from the various incidents of the moment, was absorbed in the general emotion of compassion for the sufferers.

Both the sympathy and astonishment of the town were excited, in a peculiar manner, towards an unfortunate old lady, nearly eighty years of age, who had heard the alarm in the night-time, and, in order to save her life, had hurried away on foot, from her place of residence, and had been compelled to walk many miles to reach Geneva; where she appeared, amidst the terrified crowd, before the hour of opening the city gates.

Very different was the sensation created by the misfortune, or rather by the conduct, under misfortune, of a frivolous marquis—a

petit maitre who was driven back to the town by the rude boat-inspectors from Verfoy. A party of English who had been acquainted with this emigrant, during his residence at Geneva, wishing to assist him in his escape to the Cantons, had offered him the protection of their boat. But the fans-culottes searchers of the vessel, finding their ex-countryman on board, minutely inspected every package, plundering the marquis of his, and detaining much of what belonged to his kind protectors ; but, worst of all, they robbed the unhappy marquis of his shoe-buckles, his knee-buckles, and—his beloved *ear-rings* ! and then obliged him and the party to return, not suffering the vessel to pass on account of having an emigrant on board. Upon landing from the boat, this insignificant fribble ran to my brother and myself in loud bewailing, forgetful of the greater loss of his baggage, and that his life was still in danger, and lamenting only——“ *les chers boucles d'oreilles !*”

“ Ô ! Messieurs,” cried the wretched fop,
 “ Les vilains republicains ont volé mes boucles
 d'oreilles. Les gueux ! Les voleurs ! Les

enragés démocrates ! Ils ont volé mes chères boucles d'oreilles ! Hélas ! qu'elles étoient belles ! qu'elles étoient superbes ! Ô ! pourquoi faut il que je les aie perdues ! Les voleurs ! Les coquins ! Pourquoi faut il qu'ils m'aient volé mes boucles d'oreilles !” All his concern : all his anguish seemed to centre in these idle ornaments —these effeminate appendages of his ears.

I need not explain to you the emotion created in our minds by the poor marquis's griefs. Such ineffable frivolity, exhibited at a moment of the heaviest affliction, could not but render its object contemptible. But as soon as the bitter calamity of losing his ear-drops would allow him to think of his personal safety, we, in compassion to his misfortunes, assisted in conveying him, by means of a small private boat, to the opposite side of the lake, where we put him on shore upon the territory of Savoy, and left him to steal his way through the vineyards, into the Cantons of Switzerland.

But you will say that I am straying as wide as the marquis, and, like him, dropping

trifles in your ears, to the exclusion of more immediate, or more important subjects: let me, therefore, return with you to the *Ulysses*, and tell you, that upon reaching the ship, we had so anxiously looked for, we were received as people unknown and unregarded—conducted into a large ward-room, strewn with various kinds of lumber, and there left, as in a wilderness. No births had been prepared, nor any kind of arrangement made for our accommodation. Not a cot was slung; nor any sleeping place allotted. The ward-room was open to all, and was to serve for the whole of the passengers. We were turned in loose, with six or eight other persons, and soon found ourselves to be, only, individuals of the general herd—the whole flock being left, at large, like sheep in a common fold.

The vessel is commanded by an officer of the navy, and it was no part of his duty to prepare accommodations for passengers he neither knew nor expected. She is one of the old forty-four gun frigates, and carries some of her guns as an armed transport. Had our ship been a common transport, or a mer-

chantman, I should have felt enough at home to have demanded all we required, but, from not having, before, been passengers on board a ship of war, Cleghorn, Master, and myself were quite at a loss how to proceed. Fortunately Henderson is more *au fait* to these subjects, and from understanding the necessary etiquette, kindly took upon himself the task of meliorating our condition. Having applied, with all due ceremony, to the Governor of our ocean-castle, he soon succeeded in bringing one of the lieutenants to our aid; who, very obligingly, gave immediate directions for bettering our situation, and it was gratifying, beyond all the advantages of personal accommodation, to observe with what promptitude his orders were put into execution. The packages, and other incommoding lumber, were quickly removed; and a canvas partition was put up to divide the ward-room into two separate apartments; allotting to us that on the starboard side. Four cots were flung, in a row, over the cannon, and inclosed with another canvas running, parallel with the former, throughout the whole length of the ward-room. This formed a

general sleeping birth for our mess, allowing to each his appropriate dressing room between the several guns : and, thus, were we speedily accommodated with five distinct apartments, consisting of a long narrow dining room, and, as we were assured, four *excellent* bed-rooms.

We were both amused and gratified in observing the expertness of the ship's carpenters, and all the men employed upon this occasion ; and it afforded us great pleasure to remark how prompt and obedient they were in executing the commands of their officers. On board a transport, or a merchantman, several days would have been expended, in preparing what was here completed in a single hour.

As we are only fresh-water sailors, it was, hinted, for our information, that the aft, or sternmost cot, being the upper birth on the star-board side, was deemed the place of honor, and hence appropriated to the use of the captain, always, when the officers sleep in the ward-room. My ambition did not lead me to contend for this sickening post of honor, therefore, in

obedience to my poor nauseated stomach, I, very humbly, required to be allowed to take the lowest cot of the four, and am accordingly indulged with the berth nearest the centre of the ship, where I lie with my three comrades kicking, in a row, at my head.

Our first night has been restless and disturbed—the unpleasant heaving of the ship—the creaking of bulk-heads, and other noises—the uneasy motion of the cot, and a whole host of annoyances, prevented me from sleeping. At each movement of the ship, or the cot, my feet were struck against the bulk-head at the bottom of the ward-room ; or I was bumped upon the huge cannon standing under me ; or had Cleghorn's feet roughly presented to my head. Some of these evils arose from the cot being badly slung, and will be removed ; and a few days, I trust, will reconcile me to those which cannot be remedied.

LETTER X.

Leeward Island division of the expedition puts to sea. Appearance of the fleet on doubling the point of the Isle of Wight. Its sailing forms a grand and pleasing spectacle. Firing of cannon on board a ship. Author's sensations convince him that he is no longer upon terra firma. Putrid water on board the Ulysses. Kitchen Inconveniences. Author expects to proceed to Ireland.

H. M. S. Ulysses, Nov. 15. 1798

THE long expected day is at length arrived, when our proud fleet swells its lofty sails to seek the enemy. The loud signal of departure being given, all the ships of the Leeward Island division weighed anchor this morning, and put to sea under a most favourable breeze. The Ulysses being left to wait the sailing of the convoy for Cork, we remained tranquil spectators, and had every opportunity of enjoying the scene; which was great, and splendid, and led me strongly to wish that you had been here to witness it, with us. The day being fine, and the wind from a

friendly quarter, the picture was beautiful, as it was grand and animated. On passing round, or, to use the sailors' term, on doubling the point of the Isle of Wight, all the ships seemed to fall into regular succession, forming a line of numberless extent—each elevating her sails, into view, over the territory of the island, as though they were contending which should be longest seen; or, as if striving to rival the clouds, in their travels through the skies, conscious that they, too, bore, within them, their thunder, and their lightning.

It was a pleasing spectacle to every beholder, and those who felt as Englishmen ought, derived, from it, sensations peculiarly grateful. To witness such a fleet full-swalling, from our little island, into the broad ocean, to fight our battles in a far distant country, conveyed ideas of greatness and power, which were calculated to raise a just ambition in every British bosom. The ships of war and transports exceeded two hundred sail. The immense ship, the Commerce de Marseilles, captured at Toulon, is at the head of the convoy, with the admiral, the commander in chief

of the army, and nearly a thousand troops on board. It is, currently, reported here that the whole of these, together with the Cork division, are to rendezvous at Barbadoes, and, making that the grand depôt, proceed, from thence, to the attack of various colonies.

For a long time past has this vast armament been expected in the West Indies, and during many tedious weeks has England, almost daily, looked for its departure: but to prepare, and set afloat such a fleet, and such an army, is an undertaking of no trifling magnitude: and far more difficult in the execution than those superficial observers, who are ignorant of the service, are willing to imagine. If it meets with fair winds, and proceeds without disaster, or unforeseen delay, it may yet arrive at a good season, and in time, perhaps, to effect all its intended operations.

We were, yesterday, regaled with the loud treat of hearing the ship's cannon fired, while we were on board. Every thing was cleared away, as if preparing for action;

all the doors and windows were set open, and every precaution used, to prevent injury or accident. We remained in the ward-room during the time of firing the guns, in that part of the ship, and endeavoured to be strictly attentive to the effect. It was not unlike a violent stroke of electricity : and, for a moment, we felt stunned with the shock. The jarring concussion conveyed the sensation of the whole ship having shivered asunder, or suddenly burst into atoms ; and it seemed matter of surprize that the ears of the sailors should, ever, become capable of supporting the successive and violent explosions of a hostile engagement. Notwithstanding the precaution of letting down the windows, those of the quarter gallery were shattered to pieces.

You know what a sick and suffering sailor I am, and will not be surprized to learn that the slight motion of the ship, at anchor, gives me a degree of head-ach, with a sense of nausea, and uneasiness of stomach. It does not quite amount to sickness, but is sufficient to make me know that I am not upon terra firma. Possibly the gradual introduction

effected by our present delay, may enable me better to support the more severe motion of sailing; and, from growing accustomed to the ship, while in harbour, I may be less a sufferer when we put to sea.

We are daily becoming more settled, and better reconciled to our floating dwelling: but we are sometimes annoyed by the merry crowd on the other side the canvass. Some late additions have been made to their party; and this seems now to be the general mess, and common receptacle of passengers: but, grouped as they are, friends and strangers together, we sometimes find that they are sufficiently acquainted to become more loudly joyous than is quite agreeable, in such near neighbourhoods.

As we are to wait for other ships, we may now find an opportunity of adding to the scanty stock of provisions, which we procured amidst the general scramble of embarkation; and we hope, also, that our vessel will have time to take in a fresh supply of water; for we have, hitherto, suffered, very severely, from not

having any, but what has been putrid and offensive, on board ; and coming, directly, to this from the shore, has rendered it far worse than if we had been, gradually, compelled to submit to it, after being a long time at sea. To myself, in particular, this is a weighty misfortune, as I have not the common resource of flying to wine and beer, as a relief. We have taken to our aid, both purifiers and filtering stones ; and, very soon, we hope to have good water from the shore. We are further assured of having our present sufferings compensated upon the passage ; for the Thames water, now so offensive, will soon restore itself, and, becoming settled and depurated, will be clear and sweet as we could desire.

With regard to our eating, likewise, 'tis well we are not of the Epicurean school. The many disagreeable smells, and the heaving motion of the ship, have much impaired our appetites ; and, were we squeamish, or over-dainty, we must, literally, starve ; for our ship-cuisinier happens to be fit only to cook for the seasoned stomachs of old Neptune's hardiest sons. In strength and stature this governor

of the galley might be deemed a fit opponent for Hercules, although his appearance sometimes calls up the idea of a fable spirit who had been long broiling in the dark regions of Pluto. His professional ignorance is only exceeded by his general stupidity. He makes us a daily visit at breakfast-time, to receive instructions regarding dinner; and he, usually, stumbles upon some outrageous mistake, or, totally, spoils whatever is put into his hands. A few days ago he was desired, together with other dishes, to let us have some beef-steaks; and having received his instructions, he bent his neck, in respectful civility, and hastened away: but, within a single hour after, lo, and behold! came our cook running and puffing into the ward-room, with a great dish of beef-steaks, all hot and smoking. He had used uncommon expedition in getting them ready, and, added to the blunder of giving us dinner an hour after breakfast, he had burnt the steaks as black as his own skin, and as dry as the outside of a tea-kettle.

As soon as the other vessels are ready, the Ulysses, we are told, is to proceed with them

to Cowes harbour, to join the St. Domingo division. It is probable, therefore, that my next letter may be addressed to you from Ireland.

LETTER XI.

A dreadful storm overtakes the fleet. It returns to St. Helen's in a disabled condition. Author's sensations during the storm. Those of other Passengers unaccustomed to the sea. Quaint jokes and remarks of the sailors. Disnal effects of the gale. Author and his comrades go on shore at Portsmouth, and at the Isle of Wight. Are told that the Ulysses is to proceed to Cove with the first fair wind, without waiting for the convoy.

Spithead, Nov. 19. 1796

WHEN, in my last, I mentioned to you the grand and splendid sight we had witnessed, in the sailing of an important division of our great expedition, I did not anticipate the painful reverse of, thus soon, communicating the unhappy tidings of its return. But, alas ! how uncertain are all human expectations ! Pleased as we were at the proud sailing of this fleet, only a few days since ; now, we should rejoice, still more, could we see every ship again safe in harbour.

We, yesterday, experienced a most tremendous gale, which, from its disastrous effects

among the shipping at Spithead, led to very painful apprehensions concerning the fleet which had so lately gone to sea. The wind having shifted to an unfavourable point, and blowing with great violence, it was manifest that the convoy could not proceed; and but too evident, that many of the ships must be damaged or lost; and I am sorry to add that we are, already, witnessing the melancholy confirmation of our fears, for the fleet not having cleared the channel, was unable to weather the storm, and, during the whole of this day, different ships have been dropping in at St. Helen's, in a sadly disabled state, bringing still worse tidings of those left behind. A storm so violent and destructive has seldom been known in this climate; indeed, many who had been in the West Indies, remarked, that it was scarcely inferior to a tropical hurricane. Even the admiral's ship was in extreme peril, and, with great difficulty, weathered the gale. She is now brought back in a much injured condition, being very leaky, and having a considerable depth of water in her hold. So alarming was her situation, during the storm, that if the boisterous elements had raged on but a little longer, she had, probably, gone to

the bottom, with the general, the admiral, and nearly two thousand souls on board. We are told that she is so damaged as to be unfit for further service, and that, notwithstanding the large sum lately expended in repairing her, she can never, again, be fit to go to sea.

The confusion of a crowded convoy increased the danger of the gale. Some vessels became ungovernable, and ran on board each other ; some had their sails split ; others were dismasted ; some lost their bowsprits ; and scarcely any escaped without more or less of injury. Many were lost upon our own shores—others were wrecked upon the coast of France—some sprang a leak—and several, alas ! foundered and sunk. Those, even, of the crews, who are made prisoners, from their ships having been blown upon the enemy's shore, have much cause to be happy—for others, less fortunate, sharing the fate of their vessels, perished in the fathomless deep.

Great multitudes are known to be lost ; but the full extent of this sad disaster cannot yet be ascertained, for crippled ships still continue to drop in : it is therefore hoped that some may

appear which report leads us not to expect. Among the more hopeless is the Stanley, with some hundreds of troops on board. Of this ship not the slightest intelligence can be learned, from any one yet returned. She is supposed to have gone to the bottom, and all hands to have perished! What a sad and melancholy change! By how slender a thread are the hopes of man suspended! This great fleet which had cost so much time, and toil in its equipment; and which, under the fairest prospects, so lately swelled her sails to seek the broad ocean, is already defeated, disabled, and brought to ruin! What an example! What a striking proof of the weakness of human foresight; and the uncertainty of all our wisest calculations!

The damage done to the vessels, immediately around us, and the perilous state of our own ship, although lying at anchor, had caused a too faithful representation of the evils which might have befallen us, had we been on our passage to Ireland; and rendered us happy in not having, previously, gone to sea. Signals of distress were heard on all quarters. Pieces

of masts, cordage, and planks floated by the sides of the *Ulysses*: All was hurry and alarm around us. Many vessels near to us were injured—some, driven from their anchors, drifted on board other ships, or were cast on shore, and, being there wrecked, remained, before our eyes, sad examples of the greater disasters to be apprehended from the storm.

Such, even, was the perilous insecurity of the *Ulysses*, that although, to use the sea-term, we had *lowered our top-masts, and made all snug*, it was deemed expedient to prepare the guns, for the purpose of firing signals of distress; and, had the gale continued much longer, we might have required assistance, which, at such a moment, it had been impossible to obtain.

I was, excessively, sick and ill; and from the deep rolling, heavy tossings, and the many troubled motions of the ship, was quite unable to support myself upon my legs. Staggering and stumbling I crawled out of the ward-room to the middle of the half-deck, to seek a more central part of the ship, and, there, clinging

to some firm hold, remained, sick and comfortless, to wear out a most distressful day. Afflicted with head-ach, a nauseated stomach, and trembling limbs, my contemplations were not of the most consolatory nature. I saw all the evils that were to befall our fleet under their most gloomy colors. I beheld the convoy dispersed ; ships struggling in the gale ; my fellow creatures sinking ; and the whole expedition discomfited : the mind sympathizing with the sickened frame, all was pictured as one grand scene of disaster and destruction.

My friend Master, and some others on board, suffered still more severely than I did ; for, by fixing myself to the spot where I found a free circulation of air, and, comparatively, but little motion, the nausea, which distressed me, did not proceed to the violent, and almost incessant reaching, with which they were afflicted.

In the midst of our apprehensions, and our danger, I could not but notice the strange remarks, and quaint jokes which passed among

the sailors, who were, variously, actuated by feelings of indolence, anxiety, or indifference. One of them being called upon deck, and desired to go aloft, to do something that was expedient at the top of the mast, idly crawled up, from below, muttering, "I'd rather be drowned in the sea, dammee, than at the mast-head"—another, observing a passenger in a severe fit of vomiting, exclaimed—"dammee, he's only sick for want o'grog"—and a third, as if responsive to the other, called out, "stiff breeze Jack. He'll be worse yet! Steward! why don't you give the gentleman a piece of fat pork to settle his stomach."

About five o'clock in the evening the storm began to abate; when torrents of rain lessened the wind, and brought the sailors some respite from the harassing, and perilous duties of the day. From those who have returned in safety we hear many details of real, and of imaginary distress, of ludicrous incidents, and of very truly afflicting, and melancholy events; but the distressful sum of the whole is, that the fleet is severely damaged;

many ships are lost; numbers of souls have perished; and the whole expedition is disabled and delayed.

To repeat to you all the afflicting reports we hear on the subject, would swell my letter into a volume: for, in addition to real and serious ills, the representations of passengers, not accustomed to the sea, magnify those of less importance into a terrific catalogue of injuries and disasters. Some lost their baggage—some their stock and provisions: One laments his pig—another his goat—another his poultry: Some were floating in their births, from water dashing in at the scuttles; and others, finding the sea break in at the stern and quarter-gallery windows, fancied themselves to be drowning in their beds. Pigs and sheep, chickens and ducks were washed away by dozens. Hen-coops, filled with poultry, boats, binnacles, and quarter boards were all swept off by the violence of the wind, or by the heavy seas that broke over the deck. Hogs and sheep put to sea in open boats; ducks and geese swam off in their coops; naked goats fought the waves; even

chickens and turkies took to the water, and all were seen swimming upon the ocean together.

We were on shore this morning at Portsmouth, and, from the ramparts, saw the ships of the returning fleet assembled in forest crowd at St. Helen's. From thence, also, we had a more ample demonstration of the effects which the storm had produced immediately around us ; and I am sorry to tell you that we find the injury more extensive than we had imagined. Five or six vessels lie, cast on shore, close to the town, and several are driven aground in Stokes' Bay. Two are lying near to South-sea Castle ; an artillery ship, with the Ocean transport, and a gun-boat, are on shore directly under the ramparts, and lying, dry, quite out of the sea. Some, it is hoped, may be got off again, others are so much injured, that they will be entirely lost.

Our visit to Portsmouth was for the purpose of procuring some additional provisions for the passage, and completing other necessary purchases ; and, with acknowledgments for your kind attention, I may announce to you

that it afforded me the opportunity of receiving the gay sword, and scarlet embroidered suit, in which your friend is directed to exhibit his person.

We have also had a pleasant ramble, since I last wrote to you, to the Isle of Wight, in search of eggs, poultry, and pigs to add to our sea store.

The report is, again, revived that we are to avail ourselves of the first hour of a fair wind to proceed to Cork, without waiting for any other vessel; and we are all of accord in wishing this may prove correct, for our present state of suspense and uncertainty is growing, most sadly, tedious and disagreeable.

LETTER XII.

Military incertitude not inferior to the glorious uncertainty of the law. Examples in proof of this. The Ulysses destined to make a running passage, with troops, to Martinique. Punishment of flogging a sailor round the fleet.

H. M. S. Ulysses, Nov. 23. 1795

THE uncertainty of the law has established itself into an adage : but I begin to suspect that, proverbial as it is, it must yield to the superior incertitude of military service. Even the fickle elements, with which this so intimately connects, are out-rivalled by it ; for, uncertainty is, equally, its principle and its pursuit. In my last letter I mentioned to you that we were to proceed to Cove the moment the wind was fair, and, in this idea, we had written to our friends desiring them not to address us, again, at Spithead, but to send their letters to Ireland, that they might meet us at Cork. Now, we find that our destination is again changed, and indeed, within the two last days, it has been so rapidly altered and confirmed, fixed, reversed, varied, and changed, again and again, that we

are, totally, at a loss on what assurance to fix our faith.

Yesterday we heard of new doubts and delays. The stores of the *Ulysses* were to be unstowed, in order to examine if any of them were injured by the gale ; they were to be removed, and the vessel given to the service of the Leeward Island army ; she was to proceed direct to the West Indies with troops of Sir Ralph Abercromby's division ; to go immediately to Cork, to take on board troops of the St. Domingo division ; to be converted into an hospital ship ; into a transport for stores, &c. &c. &c., so that, within the short round of twenty-four hours, the ship and ourselves were destined to an almost infinite variety of stations and purposes. To-day the reports have not been less multiplied or less varied, and the destination of the *Ulysses*, and her passengers, has changed with almost every passing hour. In the morning it was settled that the ship was to proceed to the West Indies, with the Leeward Island convoy ; and that we were to remain on board, during her passage down the Channel, but were to be dis-

tributed, into different ships of the St. Domingo division, on arriving at a certain latitude, or whenever we should fall in with the St. Domingo convoy, from Cork; and this being mentioned to us as the final arrangement, we wrote a hurried line to a friend at Cove, begging him to take charge of our letters, until we should meet at sea, or at St. Domingo. At noon the inspector general of hospitals came on board to announce to us that the *Ulysses* was to be, completely, fitted as an hospital ship, for the St. Domingo army; and to be the receiving ship of the Cork division, during the passage; and, further, that we were not only to continue on board, but officially, and to consider ourselves on duty. Yet scarcely had one short hour passed away before a different arrangement was made; for, at one o'clock, it was again decided that the *Ulysses* should proceed to Cork, and take in troops for St. Domingo; and so completely did this seem to be fixed, that the purser of the Trusty man of war, who was going to join his ship, put his baggage on board, and set off to Cork, by way of Milford Haven, assured of meeting the *Ulysses* at Cove. But evening had not ar-

rived before a new change succeeded ; and we were now told that it was *finally* settled for the Ulysses to go in company with two or three other ships of war, and make a running passage to Martinique, in order to hasten thither a body of troops, without waiting the interruptions, and tedious delays of a convoy ; and, to this end, vessels were to be alongside, early in the morning, to take out all the stores belonging to the St. Domingo division.

Presently, after we had heard the latter report, the lieutenant, commanding the ship, came on board with instructions to the same effect. This, therefore, stands as the final arrangement : but we have already known so many *final arrangements* that we begin to regard a *last* decision, with respect to the Ulysses, in the light of a diplomatic *ultimatum*—fifty times renewed ! What the morrow may bring forth is yet in embryo, and exceedingly doubtful : but the commanding officer having received his official instructions, probability would seem to render the present decision conclusive.

How we are to be disposed of is not yet determined, but, in case of this plan being adopted, we shall, no doubt, be driven to seek our births elsewhere.

I had almost forgot to notice to you that, a few mornings since, we had an opportunity of witnessing the distressful ceremony of flogging a sailor round the fleet, in consequence of a sentence passed upon him for desertion. That the sufferer might be exhibited with all the parade of a public punishment, and that all due solemnity might be given to it, a number of boats, from the different ships of war, were ordered to attend in procession. The man belonged to the *Trusty*. He was, accordingly, placed in the long-boat of that ship, and made to stand up, with his back uncovered ; and when, the other boats had assembled around him, to the number of fifteen, they all proceeded, in slow and solemn movement, to the several ships, whence these boats had been dispatched. Upon arriving at the side of each ship, the boats rested on their oars ; and the ship's company being piped upon deck, to witness the spectacle, ten

stripes were inflicted upon the bare back of the delinquent—thus dividing the sentence of a hundred and fifty lashes, into fifteen separate punishments, according to the number of ships, whose boats attended. In this way the disgrace, resulting from the crime, was made public, and the punishment not only rendered more severe, but so conducted as to be an example to the whole fleet.

LETTER XIII.

Author and his comrades again on shore. Portsmouth thronged, and many compelled to sleep in chairs, hammocks, &c. Author obtains a bed by stratagem. St. Domingo stores removed from the Ulysses; and the social quartette of the wardroom ordered to separate into the George and Bridget; and the Lord Sheffield transports. Further account of the disastrous effects of the storm. Author and his comrades supposed to have been at sea with the convoy. Felicitations of an old lady at Gosport, on seeing Dr. Cleg-horn safely returned.

Portsmouth, Nov. 30. 1795

PORTSMOUTH! methinks, I hear you exclaim! What, again on shore? Yes, again on shore! and, in England, too! Be not surprized! I have already told you that it is not less difficult to know our ultimatum, than that of a political negociation. Since I wrote to you last we have remained in a most unsettled state, wandering from Spithead to Portsmouth, and from Portsmouth to Spithead, even as men without a home—*sans* lodging on shore—*sans* birth on board. Some nights we have passed in the Ulysses—others we have slept at Portsmouth; but, in either, we have felt our-

selves mere intruders, the ship having been one grand scene of hurry and confusion—the town a great and overflowing throng. In consequence of the fleet returning, every inn, and every house is so crowded that beds cannot be procured—hence some sleep upon tables, some in chairs, and some in hammocks, hung in the sitting rooms ; while others find other expedients for the night.

Last night I was indebted to my profession for my pillow. I had gone the whole round of the town, and had sought throughout every street, and almost every house, in vain, when I was compelled to have recourse to a *ruse de guerre*, and by a stratagem, which I trust you will allow to have been both warrantable and innocent, succeeded in procuring an excellent bed, whilst many others were obliged to sit up the whole night.

The hour was late. I was ready to drop with fatigue, and had quite despaired of finding a resting place by other means, hence, necessity seeming to sanction the ex-

pedient; having chanced to hear that the landlord of one of the inns was ill, and confined to his room, and having once seen him, and heard his name, I walked straight into the bar, and, addressing myself to his lady, without asking for a bed—or entering upon other subjects, inquired civilly after Mr.———. The good lady, taking it for granted that I was well acquainted with her husband, thanked me,—entered into a long detail of the symptoms of his complaint, and with an appeal, which implied that she had not mistaken my profession, asked what might be most likely to give him relief—expressing herself grateful for the hints I suggested; and, after conversing a short time, upon indifferent subjects, and drinking a glass of brandy and water, I had the good fortune to be accommodated with one of the best beds in the house; which had, probably, been reserved in case any particular friend, or any officer of high rank or interest should apply in distress.—You, my friend, will give me credit for having contributed all in my power to the relief of Mr. ——, before I left his house in the morning.

It is now reported that three forty-four gun ships, viz. the *Ulysses*, the *Experiment*, and the *Charon*, are to take in the troops, which, during the gale, were in such extreme peril on board the vast and unwieldy *Commerce de Marseilles*, and to run out with them, as speedily as possible, to the West Indies.

Consistent with this arrangement, vessels came alongside the *Ulysses* early on the morning of the 26th instant, for the purpose of removing the St. Domingo stores; and the hospital packages, which were stowed in this ship, are now distributed into two or three different vessels; which is an improvement, gained by the change, for should either of these ships chance to be lost, captured, or delayed, still a proportion of the stores may safely arrive in the others. Further advantages may also derive from the distribution, as an assortment will be more conveniently at hand for any case of emergency—such as immediate or unexpected service, detachments, or supplying different islands or colonies.

You will feel that, with respect to ourselves, it were difficult to acknowledge similar advantages from the separation of our happy and social messes, although we are, likewise, obliged to make a division of our stores, and messes-apparatus, being now instructed to make the voyage in different ships. This is matter of high regret to us all, and the more so, as we had been long enough together to become well acquainted, and happy in each other's society, besides having jointly provided ourselves for the voyage. But it consists with the many uncertainties that surround us, and is quite within the limits of our expectation.

We have received orders to repair, two of us to the George and Bridget, and two to the Lord Sheffield: Master and myself feel ourselves fortunate in being appointed to the latter, for we had been on board the George and Bridget, and had not acquired any strong predilection in her favor. She wears the appearance of a heavy, dull-sailing vessel; and seems not to offer any thing superior in her accommodations. The cabin is deep,

dark, and gloomy, and her general appearance conveys nothing of neatness nor arrangement, but all about her looks *sombre*, unclean, and comfortless. The Lord Sheffield we have not yet seen, but her captain tells us she is a fast sailing ship, and fitted up in a superior style, with her cabin neat, light, and lively as a "drawing-room." We do not give implicit confidence to the report of one so strongly interested in speaking her fair; but the probabilities are much in her favor, she being a West India trader, and, no doubt, better fitted for passengers, and better adapted, in all respects, for a tropical climate. The George and Bridget is a large Baltic timber ship, and, of course, has not had the same occasion either for conveying or accommodating passengers.

Master and myself have also the prospect of a further advantage in the society of our friendly inspector Mr. Weir, who intends to take his birth on board the Lord Sheffield. Should we be fortunate enough thus to form a trio, we shall have far less cause to feel our regretted separation than our friends

who are doomed to make the voyage in the gloomy George and Bridget.

We have met with many of the officers at Portsmouth who were out, in the fleet, during the late destructive gale. Their reports are sad and afflicting beyond all the suggestions even of fearful anticipation. Deducting in due allowance for the augmented terrors of young and fresh-water sailors, still the whole scene, and its result have been most painfully disastrous; for, melancholy to repeat! multitudes of souls have perished; and, no less than six or seven vessels have not been heard of since the storm.

By our letters we find that many of our friends had imagined us to be at sea, and, consequently, they had read our destiny in fate's darkest page. We are happy in the power of relieving them from their fears, and rejoice that those with whom we were in the habit of more immediate correspondence, have not been exposed to similar apprehensions.

From a like error having obtained here, we are hailed, by almost all we meet, with cordial greetings on our safe return. In our walk, through the streets of Gosport, we chanced to see an old lady, with whom Dr. Cleghorn had been an inmate, during his attendance at the Haslar hospital, and the very instant the good old dame espied us, she ran to us, with out stretched arms, and welcoming the doctor, with warm embraces, spake the anxious fears with which her bosom had beat towards him; while she expressed herself enraptured to meet him, again, safe on shore. Never were friendship and regard more naturally, or more powerfully evinced. The good old woman's eyes alternately overflowed with tears, or sparkled with youthful fire: and she told the anxious griefs, and vivid terrors she had suffered, with all the glowing expression of a fond mother who had just recovered her lost, and only son.

Upon such occasions the anxiety of immediate friends and relatives is an expected tribute, and it operates as a consolation and support in the hour of peril. But the acute

and impressive concern of this kind-hearted old woman surpassed all that is looked for on the part of those, who only stand in the relation of distant acquaintances. It was, in so far, the more grateful, and not only did honor to human nature, but stood in proof of the high worth, and respectability of our esteemed comrade.

LETTER XIV.

Perilous expedition of the author and others to the Mother-bank. They save themselves on board the Diana frigate. Hospitality and humane attentions of the officers of that ship. Lieutenant Davy a valuable officer, and an accomplished man. Author and the companions of his peril pass the night on board the Diana. Proceed to the Mother-bank, and embark on board the Lord Sheffield. First impression from the appearance of that ship highly favorable.

Mother-bank, Dec. 3. 1798

MY late letter to you, from Portsmouth, had nearly been a last address. In my passage from thence to the Lord Sheffield, at the Mother-bank, I was exposed to such imminent peril as to have had scarcely a hope of escape. The necessary arrangements being made for occupying our new births, I left Portsmouth in a small four-oared boat, belonging to the Lord Sheffield, accompanied by Mr. Jaffray (the master of the ship) and Mr. M'Lean, of the hospital department; when, on our way to the Mother-bank, we were suddenly overtaken by a violent, and, situated as we were, most perilous storm.

The sky blackened ; the tearing winds roared ; and the tumid sea, gathering into frightful mountains, rushed before the wind in boisterous loudness, threatening us with instant destruction. Tossed from wave to wave, and dashed and rolled about, amidst the broken mountains of water, every moment seemed likely to be our last ; for any one of the heavy seas might have upset our little bark, or have broken over us, and sent us at once, to the bottom. Beset by multitudes of rugged and liquid hills, rupturing on all quarters, and rolling and tumbling one over another towards her, so small a boat seemed to have no chance, nor even a possibility of maintaining herself upon the rude and ever changing surface. From the deep swelling of the sea, together with the constant agitation and breaking of the waves, the sailors could not take sufficient depth to pull steadily with their oars ; nor could the boat be made to obey the helm. At one moment we were raised, as it were, on a pinnacle—at the next ingulphed in deep shade between two roaring surges, towering high above us, and seeming to say, “ Ye shall never rise again.” Yet, quickly, were

we cast upon a new formed summit, and as suddenly dashed again into the vale of still more rugged billows, each contending in hasty strife, which should be the messenger of our fate.

Poor M'Lean, who had taken his seat at the bow, in order to trim the boat, trembled, and turned pale with fear; the sailors grew tired and dissatisfied; and the captain, with a countenance strongly expressive of trouble and anxiety, begged of us not to speak, lest we should divert his attention from the helm; upon the management of which our only chance seemed to depend. Sitting at his elbow, in dead silence, as he desired, I carefully, watched his features as the barometer of my hopes and fears, and you will believe that I felt not much at ease, upon observing him betray manifest symptoms of alarm. To move was even worse than to speak, and might be instant destruction to us all, hence it only remained to us to sit in solemn stillness, and meet whatever fate should overtake us.

The captain assures me that I behaved uncommonly well, upon the occasion ; but I fear all the merit due to me was merely negative, for I am not sure that my conduct was not more the effect of resignation, than of fortitude. Seeing that no effort, no power that I possessed, could, in any degree, aid our safety, I resigned myself, in implicit obedience, to the captain's better judgment ; and, without expressing, indeed I might say, without harbouring useless fears, sat calmly prepared for any result that might occur.

To reach the Lord Sheffield was absolutely impossible ; for the wind and tide were both in concert with the storm, to prevent it : and to return to Portsmouth was, scarcely, less difficult, or less perilous, from the inability of our little boat to resist the enormous following waves, impelled by all the force of the gale and the tide.

In this critical dilemma it was decided that we should bear away, and steer for the nearest ship there was any hope of our being

able to fetch, and the captain, encouraging the sailors to continue at their oars, and bear away to leeward, directed the helm accordingly. In this attempt we struggled on, often washed with the heavy sprays, which struck against the boat, and as frequently almost upset by the tearing gusts of wind, or driven to the bottom by the disordered waves. But perseverance, together with great dexterity and address in the management of the boat, at length, succeeded in bringing us alongside the Diana frigate, where we were kindly received, and even cherished as friends rescued from the devouring deep.

Having witnessed the danger to which we had been exposed, the officers, in the most liberal manner, welcomed us on board, and refusing to hear a word of apology, insisted upon our not attempting to put to sea again until every appearance of the gale had subsided. Indeed they gave orders that our boat should be hoisted on board, and desired that we would think only of making ourselves comfortable for the night. In this they were

imperative, nor will you imagine that our obedience was reluctant.

The *Diana* was under the command of Lieutenant Davy, in the absence of Captain Faulkener. This gentleman gave directions for our receiving every accommodation the ship could afford, and tendered his services in a manner that made it grateful to accept the kindness bestowed. Every individual seemed to emulate the commanding officer in his friendly attention towards our party, inasmuch that we had cause to rejoice in the peril that had cast us on board.

As soon as we were made dry, and enabled to feel a little like ourselves, we were invited to the dinner table of the mess. The board was spread with plenty, and we partook with Mr. Davy, and the whole party of officers, who all vied with each other in kind hospitality towards the rescued strangers. Good humour prevailed; the conversation was agreeable; and the bottle passed freely until evening, when a party was formed to

a rubber at whist, and, at night, we were conducted to some of the best births of the ship.

It happened that captain Jaffray recognised an old acquaintance, in the person of the surgeon, and M Lean proved to be known to one of the young gentlemen of the cockpit, so that we were not such entire strangers as we had expected.

We were pleased to hear every person, with whom we conversed, speak of lieutenant Davy in the highest terms of praise. He was entitled to our best wishes, and we owed him much respect and gratitude, we were, therefore, exceedingly happy to learn that he had equally the esteem of his captain, his mess-mates, and the sailors. As an officer he is respected by all, and he is equally valued, and beloved as a man. Combining a pleasant suavity of manners, and mildness of command, with a correct, and firm discipline, he proves himself to be at once a sailor, and a gentleman. Active and spirited as an officer, he is an example to those about him,

and the regularity and order which obtain throughout the ship, and govern all its duties, evince the promptitude with which such an example is followed. The sailors both love and respect him, and they obey him from inclination, while they fear to offend him. As a companion, he is amiable and engaging. His address is easy; his manners are accomplished; and, independent of his great kindness to us, in the hour of peril, his general conduct, and the handsome report of his messmates, could not but call forth our esteem.

We passed the night in rest and comfort. In the morning the weather was settled and fine, therefore, after taking breakfast with the Diana's pleasant mess, our boat was lowered down, and we made the best of our way to the Lord Sheffield, reluctantly quitting the hospitable party, with whom misfortune had brought us acquainted.

Without further interruption we reached the Mother-bank, and I have now the pleasure to address you, in safety, from the Lord Sheffield,

a very fine West India ship, and as superior to the gloomy George and Bridget, even as her captain had represented. She is thoroughly clean, has a general air of neatness, and, if we may judge from her appearance, seems likely to verify the commander's report of her sailing. She is conveniently fitted out for passengers, and is, expressly, calculated for the West Indies, having awnings, scuttles, port-holes and all the necessary accommodations for the climate. The cabin is commodious, and is fitted up with mahogany wainscot, pier glasses, chairs, sofa, &c. due regard being paid to taste and ornament.

We have several guns on board, and wear the appearance of being well armed, but the ship is not sufficiently manned to defend herself against a regular attack, and this is what we have most to lament in our change from the Ulysses, for, perhaps, in most other respects our situation is improved. In point of convenience and accommodation, the Lord Sheffield is far preferable to our late favorite—the cabin being a neat and distinct sitting room, and the sleeping births, separate state

rooms entirely shut away from it, and enclosed as private apartments. Here we shall require no canvas partition to keep us from the noisy crowd of another mess, but may feel ourselves as retired and uninterrupted as we could be in a private room on shore.

LETTER XV.

Excursion to the Commerce de Marseilles at St. Helen's. Appearance of that ship as viewed from a small boat at her side. Author visits his comrades on board the George and Bridget : goes to the play at Portsmouth. Tumultuous proceedings at the Theatre. Author returns to the Lord Sheffield. Dr. Cleghorn joins the mess on board that ship. Symptoms of sailing. Linen taken wet from the wash-tub.

Lord Sheffield, Dec. 8. 1795

AGAIN I have been unsettled, and moving about from place to place, making my home sometimes on board, sometimes on shore. Upon examining my baggage, soon after I joined the Lord Sheffield, I perceived that one of my boxes was missing ; and it has cost me a long, and very sickly round, to recover it, in consequence of our old ship, the Ulysses, having changed her birth, and dropped down to St. Helen's to take in troops from the Commerce de Marseilles. In following her we were brought into an open and heavy-swellling sea, the motion of which made me very unwell, and led me to contemplate the probable suf-

ferings I shall have to support upon the long voyage we are about to undertake.

Capt. Jaffray never having been on board a ship of such immense bulk, availed himself of my necessities, and took the command of the boat, upon this excursion, in order to view the vast Commerce de Marseilles. I wish it were practicable to convey to you, in words, the sense of grandeur with which the mind is inspired on first approaching such an enormous floating battery ; or to paint to you the sensations excited by rowing, in a small boat, close under her stern, and her sides ; but it were quite impossible for the pen to describe how diminutive we felt, and how immense and wonderful she appeared.—To express it by the image of the knat and the camel, it were necessary to suppose the former the minutest of its race, and the latter hugely overgrown. Looking up from our little skiff the sight was truly awful—the figure of the ship was forgotten—the hull appeared a mountain, the masts lofty obelisks erected upon it ; and the tremendous batteries, projecting from her sides, conveyed the idea of a stu-

pendous rock hanging over us, fortified with many tiers of cannon.

We also availed ourselves of this excursion to make a visit to our friends on board the George and Bridget, which ship appears still more *sombre* and uncomfortable, after witnessing the neatness of the Lord Sheffield.

Having to pass another night or two at Portsmouth, and finding that a company of players had arrived, we took the opportunity of visiting the theatre. The performance, as might be expected, was *très mediocre*, yet it might have passed off tolerably well, and with sufficient amusement for the evening, but for an unhappy interruption, which arose from some of the actors opposing the will of the audience, respecting a song, and introduced a scene of tumult and disorder, very like what I before mentioned to you from Southampton.

The performers at the country theatres do not seem to feel, like those of the London boards, how much they are the servants of the

public. In town, it may be remarked that the house, on all occasions, is perfectly obedient to the audience. This is discreet on the part of the managers and the actors, and entitles them to some merit, for it is often a matter of astonishment and admiration how they can govern themselves, so implicitly as they do, and maintain enough of forbearance to bend submissive to the will of the public.

The loyal song of "God save the King" being called for, some of the performers advanced to the front of the stage, and, bowing to the audience, obtained a general silence, from the idea that they came forward to sing it: but, to the surprise of the multitude, they began the air of "Rule Britannia," which, however grateful to the ears of Englishmen, was not the song demanded; therefore from a sense of indignity, at the actors assuming the quality of dictators, they strenuously opposed it, and a violent clamor ensued. "Rule Britannia" was, however, continued, notwithstanding the loud opposition, and the general cry for "God save the King;" and after having gone through this, amidst all the con-

fusion of groans, hisses, and every noise of disapprobation, one of the actors advanced a step before the others, and insolently brandishing his arms, began the song that had been called for, which was then sung without spirit, and with the most careless indifference. Tell me if a London audience would have submitted to such an insult ; or if a metropolitan performer would have been hardy or imprudent enough to have hazarded such misconduct ?—No ! methinks I hear you reply : he would have been driven from the stage, and would never have dared——never have presumed to return, until repentance and humility had led him forth, in due submission, to offer his apologies.

We returned, yesterday, to the Lord Sheffield, and you will be glad to know that we were accompanied by our friend Cleghorn, who, in consequence of a new arrangement, is permitted to join our mess, so that we have again the prospect of crossing the Atlantic pleasantly *en quartette*. Dr. Henderson is less fortunate, for, while we are, agreeably, associated to our former number of professional

colleagues, he is left to make the passage alone, or, perhaps, crowded with strangers in the gloomy George and Bridget: nor do circumstances now seem to afford any probability of a further change, for both the appearance of the weather, and the report of the hour, seem to imply that we have, at length, made our *final* visit on shore.

To-day a signal has been given for the fleet to unmoor; and, in consequence of this, the Lord Sheffield has dropped down from the Mother-bank to the Eastern part of Spithead.—We have taken the precaution of bringing our linen on board, wet from the wash-tub, lest we should be compelled to leave it behind, for should the wind continue at the point from which it now blows, we may be to-morrow on our passage.

LETTER XVI.

Convoy sails on the 9th of December. Author promises to make notes on the passage for his friend, if the sea will let him. Splendid appearance of the convoy. It meets with tempestuous weather. Description of a storm at sea. Elements hostile to the expedition. Gale repeated. Lord Sheffield left alone upon the ocean—Prevented from giving relief to a sinking ship. A melancholy and afflicting scene ensues.

Lord Sheffield, at sea, Dec. 31. 1796

AT length we are at sea ! the convoy sailed from Spithead and St. Helens, the day after I sent you my last letter, and I now lift my pen to you upon the bosom of the wide Atlantic. From the time of the ever memorable attempt of the fleet to proceed upon the voyage, in the month of November, the adverse winds, which had driven it back, in so shattered and disastrous a condition, detained it, in harbour, until the 9th instant, when it again put to sea under a serene sky, and propitious breezes ; but, notwithstanding these favorable appearances, we have, since, had a most harassing and perilous succession of storms, one having, scarcely,

subsidéd before it has been followed by another, and I have now so entirely lost my confidence in the weather, that although I am sitting in tolerable quietness to write to you, at this moment, I scarcely dare hope to finish my letter before I am again tossed from my seat, by a renewal of the gale—feeling that the present may be only one of those short respites, which, like the delusive intervals of convulsion, only prepare the body for a more violent struggle.

It is now the last day of the old year, and, whichever way I look, my eye surveys only an unbounded ocean. When we may again see land, it were difficult to conjecture, but my pen shall prepare for you some *notes* of our proceedings, occasionally, when the sea will permit me to guide it; and I will send them by any vessel we may chance to meet on the passage, or by the earliest packet, after we reach the West Indies.

On the first morning of our being at sea, the weather was clear and mild, and the whole fleet, consisting of nearly three hun-

dred vessels, of various magnitude and burden, was assembled in compact form, occupying a certain circle of the ocean's surface, and gliding smoothly on the passage. It formed one of the grandest spectacles ever beheld. Never shall I forget climbing up the throwds, as high as the main top, to enjoy it in all its perfection. The sun shone; the sea was smooth and undisturbed; the air serene. All sails were set, and the vessels being near to each other, the white canvass seemed spread, in crowded continuation, throughout the whole extent of the fleet. Looking down upon the multitude of ships, it created the idea of a whole nation moving upon the waters. It was a proud emblem of Britain's glory. We appeared to command the whole empire of the main; and the prospect, being calculated to excite flattering hopes of victory and success, could not fail to be viewed, by every true Briton, with delight. But alas! how delusive were these auspicious dawns! We had advanced but little on our passage, before a dire reverse succeeded. The sun was now obscured; a thick fog overspread the ocean; and the

whole fleet was shut from our sight. Dark clouds gathered around; the heavens scowled in terrific blackness; the shadowed sea swelled with pregnant throes; and the ships heaved in sickening motion. At length the heavy clouds burst into a roaring storm; the waters broke into huge and tremendous mountains; and the ships rolled and pitched, in dreadful agitation, upon the ruptured surface. All seemed a mighty conflict. The boisterous gale tore, in hideous sound; the fleeting clouds hurried before the wind; the rugged ocean, in violent disorder, hurled mountain over mountain, and issued forth loud-roaring threats of destruction. The ships, struggling against the wild and furious waves, were, at one moment, tossed on a pinnacle to the heavens, and, the next, plunged into a gloomy deep, surrounded by dark and disordered mountains; whence there seemed no possible escape. In an instant they were again amidst the clouds, and again as suddenly sunk in the dark valley of liquid hills: thus, alternately, threatening us with the danger of being hurled from a summit, or swallowed up in a frightful gulf of the unfathomable ocean. Nor

had we, barely, to encounter the common dangers of the sea, but, from being amidst a crowded fleet, were, every instant, liable to the additional peril of running aboard some neighbouring ship, and being dashed in pieces, or driven, at once, to the bottom; and to this we were equally exposed by the darkness of the night, and by a heavy fog. The terror of these critical moments is necessarily augmented by the lively apprehensions of those who are but little accustomed to the sea: nor is this wonderful, for, where every motion, and every sound is calculated to excite alarm, he must be more than a philosopher, he must be a sailor, who can regard even the less imminent perils with unconcern.

During a storm, the deep rollings of the ship; her deeper lurches, the thundering concussion of heavy seas against her sides, the hollow dreary sound of the wind howling in her sails and rigging, the hurry and clamor of the ship's company, the clattering of broken plates, dishes, and basons, and the dismal creakings of the masts, bulkheads, and

other parts of the vessel, all conspire to create tumult and confusion, and to keep alive the most trembling apprehensions. At one moment the ship is upset, the next you feel her strike upon a rock: suddenly she is shattered to atoms; or, foundering, sinks to the bottom; and, while you are absorbed in these sensations, a sea, or heavy spray breaks over the deck, a threatening wave beats in the quarter gallery, or a rolling mountain dashes the stern windows into the cabin. The water now pouring upon you, from every opening, your fears are confirmed by the confusion of the moment, and you feel that the vessel is positively sinking. It has been my lot to experience, precisely, these sensations. At one time I have hurried upon deck, in the intention of throwing myself into the sea, there to cling to a part of the wreck, in the hope of outliving the storm: At another I have sat in silence, upon my birth, with the water creeping up to my knees, and, hopeless of being saved, have resolved to submit to my fate, and seek the deep, without useless bewailings. Quickly, the accident has been repaired, and, in the moment of

despair, I have been greeted with tidings of safety.

Often, in the midst of threatening appearances, and manifold disquietudes, you are visited by the carpenter, with the "dead-lights," who, fixing them in the stern windows, nails you up in darkness, as in a coffin, and with as much *sang froid* as men of his calling screw up the bodies of those who are actually dead: at the same time replying, with unfeeling indifference, to your anxious and fearful inquiries regarding the necessity of that step being taken, that it is "*only to keep the spray from breaking the windows!*" But I am fatiguing you with a detail of what every one knows; what all have read; and most, who have been at sea, have felt: let me, therefore, revert, from storms in general, to our present voyage, in which you will find, perhaps, more of novelty.

What shall I say to you of our great armada—of our unfortunate, unhappy fleet! Ere this can reach you, you will have had many, alas! too many melancholy proofs of

the disasters which have befallen it. Did ever the seas—did the heavens ever fight so cruelly against an expedition! were ever the elements so decidedly hostile to the great and flattering efforts of man!

To convey any adequate idea of our situation would require the best energies of your own all-animating pen; but, as that pen is but the representative of your imagination, call this in aid of an humbler quill, and you may have some conception of the peril and the horrors to which we have, already, been exposed, and which we may still have to encounter! After the violence of the first gale, most of our scattered fleet, owing to the great attention and exertions of Admiral Christian and his officers, was again assembled, and we felicitated ourselves in the hope of proceeding to our place of destination without further interruption: but the turbulent mountains of a disordered sea were, scarcely, reduced to a more tranquil surface, before the storm was renewed with additional violence. Quickly we were more scattered than before. Many of the ships, unable to resist this second shock, were,

now, much injured, and obliged to put back into port. Some, we suppose, again joined the admiral, and others wholly lost the convoy. We were among the latter, but when the weather cleared we fell in with a small division of the fleet, with which we sailed in company, for several days. Further repetitions of the storm again separated us, and we were tossed about, seeing no more than three, sometimes but two, and often only a single ship, until, at length, we found ourselves quite alone upon the broad and merciless ocean.

Previous to our final separation we witnessed a scene of a most melancholy and distressing nature. Knowing the exquisite sensibility of your feelings, on such occasions, I ought to spare them the sad relation, but that it may exhibit to you one of the dangers of the sea, in a point of view under which you may not, perhaps, have contemplated it. At the most furious and terrific moment of the storm, we suffered the cruel affliction of seeing a neighbouring ship in the utmost danger of being lost, without having the power of affording her any relief. She hoisted a flag, and fired guns

of distress ; but the gale was so dreadful, and the sea running so frightfully high, that it was, totally, impossible to give her assistance. We stood towards her, and kept her anxiously in view, in the hope of administering aid, should she be supported upon the surface until the weather became moderate. Unhappily the storm continued increasing rather than diminishing in violence. We looked fearfully on the ship, expecting every instant to see her go to the bottom. She repeated signals of distress. We heard them, and saw them, but were unable to obey them. It was a most melancholy and awful crisis. We regarded her in anxious forebodings, examining her, both with the eye and with the telescope, again and again. Her masts were standing ; her sails entire ; and the rigging, apparently, perfect ; but this, which to landsmen would have seemed favourable, we discovered to be the very reverse ; for, hence it was that our best sailors formed the fatal conclusion that her situation was hopeless, and that she must have sprung a leak !

We watched the heavens, and the wa-

ters in painful solicitude, but saw no relaxation of the storm. Tremendous mountains at one moment concealed the wretched ship from our view : at another we appeared to be enveloped, together, in the same dark and dismal gulf. You will conceive our sensations upon feeling that, in one instant more, this deep pit of the ocean might be the grave of every soul on board. Signals, denoting the extreme of danger, were repeated: the sea rolled in terrific disorder: we bent our eyes in vain towards the vessel, deploring her threatened fate, and our own inability to prevent it! Night came on. We lost her in darkness, and——beheld her no more!

Heaven grant that she may be in safety! But we all fear she cannot have withstood the violence of the gale, which continued until morning, and throughout the whole of the following day, with unremitted fury. Our anxiety was also much augmented, from having seen masts, spars, and other pieces of wreck, float by the side of our ship, when the storm abated. Until now I had regarded the sailing in company with a fleet as a kind of

social protection ; but henceforth I shall feel no desire to move in crowded society on the ocean. Being alone, we now suffer the risk of falling into the hands of the enemy ; but, compared to our late suffering, even the vilest of French prisons loses its horrors ; for, to a man of any sensibility, what can be so truly afflict- ing as to see a number of his fellow-crea- tures plunged in the deepest distress, and to feel himself withheld from tendering them relief ! Our solitary situation must prevent a repetition of such a scene : it also removes the peril of our being injured or destroyed, by other ships, of which we had much dread, while we were amidst the fleet : for it is not only during a storm that there is danger of one ship running foul of another : it is equally, and perhaps, even, more likely to happen when the wind abates,—more particularly if this occurs, suddenly, for then the ship, not being supported by the resist- ance of the gale, gives way to the heavy seas, and, from disobeying the helm, is liable to be driven aboard other vessels. Often, at this moment, as well as during the storm, the ships appear to have no weight, or depth of

purchase in the water, but they toss and roll about, at the mercy of the waves, like empty barrels floating upon the surface.

At the period of separating from the fleet we knew not our place of destination, and hence it became expedient to open the sealed instructions: from which we discovered that Carlisle Bay, in Barbadoes, was fixed as the general rendezvous of the fleet. Here, therefore, all our attractions lie, and to this port we are endeavouring to steer; but adverse winds, and unprosperous gales perpetually oppose our progress. It is now more than three weeks from the date of our departure, and we are yet beating about much nearer to you than you imagine, having, hitherto, advanced, on our passage, only twelve degrees of longitude, and three of latitude. But in whatever latitude or longitude—amidst whatever storms or dangers, I am always

Yours.

LETTER XVII.

The new year mild and of good promise. Æolus and Neptune enraged against the youthful deputy of time. Storms and gales repeated. Delight of associating with congenial friends. A good ship scarcely perishable at open sea. Accidents and disasters of the Lord Sheffield. Contrast between landsmen and seamen during a storm. Apathy of sailors regarding the weather. Their peculiar degrees of comparison. Cool replies of an old steward. Odd tumblers, and postures of the passengers amusing to the sailors. Dinner scene during a gale. Superstition and prejudices of sailors. Whistling on board ship. Mother Cary's chicken. Blowing for a wind. Marks of the Lord Sheffield having passed the Azores.

At sea, Jan. 24.

ON concluding my former letter, I had pleased myself with the expectation of not communicating another sentence of woe : indeed I had hoped not to resume my pen upon the face of the restless Atlantic ; and that, long ere this, I might have addressed you from the island of Barbadoes ; but, unhappily, nearly four more tedious weeks have been consumed, in struggling against the united violence of merciless winds, and a relentless ocean. New-

year, attended by gentle and fair-robed zephyrs, presented himself in smiles. His countenance was benign—his every look bespoke mildness and tranquillity. We did funeral honors to his tempestuous father, without the affectation of grief; and greeted each other on escaping from his turbulent government, to a milder reign. We now sailed pleasantly on our passage. The breeze was fair—the sea smooth and tranquil—the sun shone with genial warmth—the ship advanced in steady motion; and our cares were dissipated in the hope that all our disasters were buried in the grave of boisterous *Old—year*. But, alas! our cup was not yet full—the period of probation was not thus to end. *Æolus* and stern *Neptune*, enraged at the mildness of the new deputy of hoary time, poured forth all their ire; and, tearing away the delusive veil, openly, exposed our error, proclaiming, in loud tyranny, that the young steward of the winged hours was not the milder son, but the very twin-brother of the late tempestuous agent. Our flattering prospect had not the duration of a day! Ere morning dawned, dark clouds obscured the sun; the tumid ocean heaved

in threatening anguish, and, a thick storm gathering at the horizon, the winds and waves rushed into conflict, and, in all the dreadful wrath of tempest, pronounced themselves the messengers of angry Gods !

From this moment gale has succeeded to gale, and storm to storm, defeating all our happiest calculations ; even the best established prognostics have deceived us, clouds separating, a change of wind, heavy rain, and the like, are no longer any indication of an abating storm. At one time, under the clearest azure sky, and the brightest, fairest sun, the dry wind tears in keenest violence, as if rushing, from the parched heavens, to devour all the fluids of the ocean : at another, loaded with moisture, it bursts into sudden gusts and squalls, heaving the ship, as it were, out of the sea, and leaving her suspended in air ; and, as if the fates had resolved to torment us, whenever the wind, and the heavy waves have a little subsided, and we have looked for steady sailing on our passage, a breeze has sprung up, from the most unfavorable point of the heavens, which, though mode-

rate, for a moment, has quickly increased, again, to a storm. Seven long weeks, now, have passed, and with difficulty can it be said that we have had an interval of one diurnal round, free from the perils of raging winds, or of the huge and shattered mountains thereby engendered!

Did I not feel that I am steering *from* my friends, the cruel perplexities of this tormenting voyage would lead me into a vow—perhaps somewhat rash—never again to intrust my body to so fickle and merciless a guardian as the sea. But not all her frowns or threats—not all the perils of which she is mistress, nor any thing short of death, can deter me from again hazarding my person, in order to return amidst those I love. Novelty has many charms. It is pleasing to regard society under all its forms, and to contemplate the human species in every country and every clime; but even in this, the great enjoyment centers in the endearing hope of returning, some day, to be stationary amongst our friends; for to associate with those of similar minds, whose dispositions—whose interests and pursuits are congenial

with our own, is the greatest gift of society—the highest boon of civilized life : beyond this, the world has nothing to offer.

You, who know me, are well aware that my mind delights not to dwell on the dark surface of events. The severity of the trial is perhaps at an end. Undaunted, I yet look forward to the happy termination of our passage ; and, even, in our present suffering, see much of eventual good, for it will arm me against a multitude of future alarms ; already, indeed, am I become so courageous a sailor as to regard the recurring gales with patient firmness ; and to look with tranquil eye at the immense mountains which strike the ship, or the dashing waves which out-top her masts : indeed I can almost fancy that a good ship is imperishable at open sea ; and could you know what ours has borne, you would be inclined to countenance the opinion. She has amply proved herself to be what the sailors term *a good sea boat* ; and, from what I have said of our passage, you will feel the force of the technical expression that *she can live in all weathers*. The shocks and beatings she

has withstood, are almost incredible. Often have I felt astonished that the huge seas and raking winds have not torn every plank asunder, and shivered her to atoms. Her top-masts, yards, and different parts of the rigging have been carried away—her sails split—the quarter boards stove in: things have been washed overboard from the deck—seas have broken over her—sprays dashed in the cabin windows—and various other accidents and disasters have befallen her: yet all have been repaired, and she still rides triumphant!

Often our party meet with drooping countenances, and sit down in gloomy silence, not recovering their spirits throughout the day! At other times they grow restless and irritable, and cannot remain a quarter of an hour in the same place. During the severity of the storm I have often remarked how differently the scene has affected the minds of those accustomed, and those who are unaccustomed to the sea. The sailor, patiently observes the gale, lowers the yards and topmasts, furls or reefs his sails, makes all snug, and thanks the tempest for a holiday:—heedless of the

that I have, before, had occasion to make many voyages by sea, but my stomach assures me that I can never become a sailor: yet, from this long trial, in bad weather, I find that I am growing courageous, for I now can witness the seeming apathy of older sailors without surprize; and can even listen to the returning gale, rather with regret for the delay it occasions, than with any apprehension, regarding the dangers to which we are exposed. When, from the tossing of the ship, we are unable to walk, or even to remain upon our legs, we seek a quiet corner of the cabin—seat ourselves—take up a book—and, in patient reading, hope for better weather. Occasionally we venture, in giddy and stumbling step, as high as the companion door-way, and, looking round, amidst all the rage of the storm, prophesy gentle breezes and smooth seas. In these visits we often feel wonder and amazement at observing the carpenter and his mates working, quietly, in the tops; and the sailors hanging about the yards and rigging, in seeming unconcern—tossed by each rolling sea from side to side, far beyond the limits of the ship, and, not unfrequently, while seated at the end of the yard

dipped and drenched in the foaming billows of the ocean! The indifference of sea-faring men to the dangers around them is exemplified in every part of their conduct, and, even, in their common expressions. Often when we have felt the most vivid apprehensions from the fierceness of the storm, and the huge roughness of the ocean, and have, tremblingly, sought relief, by an appeal to the captain or mate, we have met only a look of unconcern, or, at most, the laconic reply "*it blows fresh.*" From their quaint and technical terms it is difficult for any one, unaccustomed to the sea, to know precisely what they mean to convey. Their degrees of comparison are peculiar to themselves, and, at first, not easy to be comprehended: taking the term fresh as the positive, they say it blows *fresh*—it blows *strong*—it blows *hard*: and again, to denote the severest possible gale, they assume hard as the positive—add an oath to form the comparative, and augment that oath to constitute the superlative: thus, it blows *hard*; it blows *d—hard*; it blows *d—hard by —*. Previous to this extremity we are commonly furnished with an omen, by the captain com-

ing down, below, to change his long coat for a short round jacket, and from this we always prognosticate unfavorably, it being a precaution which denotes busy, and perhaps, perilous employment.

Our steward is a very old sailor, tough as the ropes of the ship, and callous to every alarm ; and, being the person more immediately about us, it most frequently falls to his lot to be teased with questions regarding the weather, the wind, and the sea ; and the steady apathy of his feelings, together with his excessive *sang froid* and unconcern, have been often subjects of remark—sometimes, indeed, of vexation to us ; for his utter insensibility to the circumstances, which called forth our cares and alarms, have, occasionally, provoked us. During one of our perilous storms, the wind having shifted to a point somewhat less unfavorable, although still blowing a terrific gale, the usual question was asked—Well, steward ! how is the weather ? “ *Squally, squally, gentlemen—the wind’s coming about—be fine weather soon.*” According to the feelings of this old weather-beaten tar, the severest

tempests that we had suffered, had been only squalls, for, in the midst of the most tremendous gales, his reply had always been "*Squally, a little squally, gentlemen.*"—"Are we making any way, steward?" "*Ob yes, fine wind, quite free, going large, make six or seven knots.*" "But surely we have too much of this good wind, steward?" "*Ob no, fine wind as can blow, gentlemen—but a little squally—rather squally.*"

The ship's company often reap much amusement from the little accidents—the ridiculous tumbles—and the strange postures which the passengers are thrown into by the unsteady motion of the vessel: indeed we now feel so little alarm during a gale, that we sometimes disregard its perils, and join in their smiles and jokes at the ludicrous occurrences which happen among ourselves. Hogarth might have feasted upon them. In the confusion of motions, caused by the heavy seas, if we attempt to walk, we *fetch way*, and are tossed to the farthest side of the cabin, in all the odd and uncommon figures that can be imagined: and, often, before we can regain our legs, the ship yields to another wave, and we are

tumbled, in the most ludicrous manner, to the opposite side, kicking, strugling, or crawling, amidst a confusion of moving chairs, stools, boxes, and other furniture.

Our dinner ceremony is often rendered a humorous scene: at this hour the cabin being the general rendezvous of the party, we meet—crawl, trembling, towards the table—and tie ourselves in the chairs. A tray is set before us, with deep holes cut in it for the dishes, plates, and glasses; the table and chairs are lashed to the deck; yet one or other frequently gives way and upsets half the things in the cabin! Presently enters the steward with soup, followed by his little slave with potatoes; and the servants with such other covers as there may chance to be. But scarcely are the things upon table, and the servants stationed, clinging to the backs of our chairs, before a sudden lurch of the ship tumbles all into disorder. Away go steward, servants, and little Mungo, to the lee corner of the cabin: the soup salutes the lap of one of us; another receives a leg of pork; a third is presented with a piece of mutton or beef; a couple of chickens or ducks

fly to another ; the pudding jumps nearly into the mouth of the next ; and the potatoes are tossed in all directions, about the deck of the cabin. One saves his plate ; another stops his knife and fork ; some cling to the table, thinking only of saving their persons ; one secures the bottle ; another, half fallen, holds up his glass in one hand, and fixes himself fast to his chair with the other. Chaos is renewed ! every thing is in motion—every thing in disorder and confusion. At the next roll of the ship the servants, staring with amazement, again *fetch way*, and, with extended arms, are tossed to the opposite side of the cabin, where they cling fast, and remain fixed as statues, afraid again to move : and, although we are lashed in the chairs, ourselves, it is with difficulty we can maintain our seats. Plates, dishes, knives, forks, and glasses clatter together in all the discord of the moment : the steward and his boy, crawling upon their hands and knees after the dancing potatoes, the flying fowls, or walking joints, are rolled over and over at our feet ; and all is disorder and confusion. The ship now becomes steady for a moment ; the scattered parts of

the dinner are collected ; and those who have escaped sickness, again attempt to eat. Some, foreseeing all these accidents, fix themselves in a corner upon the cabin-deck, and take the plate between their knees, fancying themselves in security: but, quickly, they are tumbled, in ridiculous postures, to the other side of the cabin, sprawling, with outstretched limbs, like frightened crabs. Some, having no calls of appetite, join not in the feast, but lie swinging up and down in their cots or hammocks ; others remain rolling from side to side in their births. Some cry out with sore bruises ; some from being wetted with the sprays : one calls for help ; another relieves his stomach from sickness ; while others, lamenting only their dinner, loudly bewail the soup, the meat, and the pudding. Some abuse the helmsman ; others the ship ; and others the sea ; while all join in a chorus of imprecations upon the wind.

It has been, commonly, observed that sailors have many prejudices and superstitions. They often predict a gale, from circumstances which seem to bear no kind of

connexion in the chain of cause and effect. The prejudice against whistling, on board ship, appears to be universal ; nor do I remember ever to have heard a sailor whistle in any ship ; beyond the common *whew-ew, whew-ew*, when he wants a breeze ; and passengers are even called upon to pay a forfeit should they, however inadvertently, be heard to whistle. The superstition respecting the flight of a bird, which they call mother Carey's chicken, is peculiarly strong. This is a black small bird with long wings, which flies swiftly and very near the water. It only appears, they say, in stormy weather, and however temperate when the chicken is seen, they always predict, from its presence, an approaching gale. The latter part of the observation we have but too often seen verified, for the presence of mother Carey's chicken, has, too frequently, been succeeded by a violent storm : but in how far the fact of this bird appearing, only, in such weather may be correct, we have had little opportunity of judging.

With pleasure I feel myself able to inform you that we have some indications of having

passed the Azores. The temperature of the atmosphere is become very genial to our feelings, and, amidst all our tossings and buffetings, we seem to have brought all-inspiring May close upon the heels of frigid Christmas. A considerable quantity of sea-weed appears floating upon the water, and this, the sailors say, is never seen to the north of the Western Isles, it being supposed to proceed from the gulf of Mexico, and not to be carried beyond these islands. We are steering more to the south than our direct course; but we are glad to make *southing* at the expence of a little *wesling*, in the hope of beating out of the latitude of the tormenting gales, which have, almost incessantly, beset us, from the moment of our departure from England: but I forget that I am tiring you with uninteresting details, and that you may think my letter is growing as tedious as the voyage.

Adieu.

LETTER XVIII.

Lord Sheffield arrives at Barbadoes. Setting in of the trade wind. Striking change in the sailing and working of the ship. Lord Sheffield falls in with No. 4. transport, with a band of music on board—speaks a Spanish vessel—also the Britannia transport. Advantages of being on board a West India ship. Author adopts a preparatory regimen to guard him against the effects of climate. Exclamation of one of the author's comrades, on being first attacked with "prickly heat." Distant land visible to sailors long before it is to others. First appearance of Barbadoes. Lord Sheffield, happily, prevented by the land breeze, from going into the harbour at night. Scenery on entering Carlisle Bay.

Carlisle Bay, Feb. 13

REJOICE with me and give thanks! After all our perils and dangers we are, again, safe at anchor, with terra firma in view! How delightful an element—how cheering—how animating is the solid earth! Even its grosser part is now endeared to us, and we hail the heavy soil in cordial sympathy, almost rejoicing that our very bodies belong to dull clay! During nine long weeks had we been wandering, amidst a multitude of perils, upon the fickle waters, without once obtaining even

the most distant view of land: but of this enough! Let me not recall, to your mind, scenes that we are endeavouring to forget. Throughout the last fortnight the horrors of boisterous old Ocean have been assuaged, and for two or three days, after writing my last notes, we were nearly becalmed. The foaming Atlantic became smooth and tranquil as the fish-pond of a pleasure ground; and, while resting in the most genial temperature, we had, only, to lament the total absence of that wind, which had long been so frightfully abundant. This placid interval was occupied in making preparations for fair sailing; and the captain flattered us with the hope of having passed the stormy latitudes. The top-gallant masts were set—the royals and steering sails made ready—fishing lines were thrown into the still sea—and an awning prepared for the quarter-deck; all of which were indications of steady breezes, warm regions, and pleasant sailing. Sensible that you will feel your share of complacency upon the occasion, I must not neglect to note the event of a most joyous day—a day which will be held in gladness by our party, so long as re-

turning years shall continue to place before us the 25th of January. We were in latitude $27^{\circ} 49'$, the thermometer at 69° . The morning was mild; the sea still and smooth, as a lake: all nature seemed hushed in silence, and no wind could be felt. We rose early, and enjoyed a steady walk on the, now, quiet deck. The sun, protruding from the bosom of a tranquil ocean, softly stole above the horizon, and, swelling into globular form, mildly, assumed refulgent brightness, and spread his genial rays around. From excess of motion we had now lapsed into perfect rest. We contemplated the change with admiration and delight: yet wished enough of wind to carry us on our voyage. The timoneer left the helm; and the ship remained immoveable upon the water. Casting our eyes over the silver surface of the sea, to behold the beauteous rising of the sun, we offered aspirations that fierce Eurus, in the placid humour of milder Zephyr, might follow in his train. Two strange vessels were observed to be in sight—a brig and a schooner. The former was directly in our wake, and viewing this, amidst the universal stillness

that prevailed, we observed, with surprise, that she was moving, towards us, with full sails. At this moment the sky darkened; the thermometer fell to 64; a gentle rippling spread, lightly, over the still surface of the water; and, almost imperceptibly, brought us - - - - a favorable breeze! It was from the north-east; and so soft and steady that scarcely did we feel the vessel in motion, ere we were advancing at the rate of five knots an hour! What we had so long and anxiously fought, was now arrived, and we most cordially hailed - - - - - *the trade wind!* The sailors announced it in loud greetings: need I say that we partook in their liveliest joy! You will readily conceive, without expecting me to describe, our feelings upon the occasion. Never was a happier moment! All sense of our long sufferings vanished, and we were in perfect raptures on this glad event. Indeed we had much cause to think ourselves fortunate on being saluted by the favoring trades, in their very earliest latitude. This was a most grateful period of our passage, and, together with the weather we have since experienced, has, in some degree, compen-

fated former evils. The temperature grew cooler than it had been during the few days of calm. The breeze freshened, and all hands were busily occupied in preparing and setting all possible sail, to obtain the full benefit of this great and constant trader's friend. Quickly new canvases stretched from every point of the masts and yards, and the ship, winged with five additional sails, widely spread her expanded pinions to embrace the breeze. What a change ! transported, at once, from the perils of severe tempest, to the finest, smoothest sailing ! During seven tedious weeks we had not known the wind from the point we wished ; and we had been perpetually beset with all the dangers of raging storm. Now, the breeze was all we could desire ! Sicknefs, and other uneasy feelings were dispersed ; we exercised, freely, upon the deck ; and sailed on our passage, almost without perceiving the vessel move ! So rapid, indeed, was our progress, that the ship seemed to feel no resistance, but to fly, uninterrupted, through the water !

The crowded sails now remained night

and day. No change: no new arrangement — occasional bracing, only, was required! We stood before the wind, and in all the delight of fair weather, and fine sailing, made from 160 to 200 knots within the sailor's day—from noon to noon. In such seas, and with such a wind, the ship's company might have slept; leaving the helmsman only, to steer the vessel's course. The delay, the difficulties and dangers we had met with, served but to augment the value of the ever-constant trades, and to render them even more enchanting than we had hoped. The steadiness of this friendly breeze, and its certainty of duration, likewise enhanced its charms. So truly delightful did we find it, and so pleasant were the wide ocean, and the weather, that, had not former sickness, with the torment of repeated gales, already confirmed my abhorrence of the sea, I know not but I might have been led into the belief that discomfort and a sailor's life were not strictly synonymous!

It were wrong to adulterate these happy tidings—or to chequer this letter with any

circumstance not perfectly in unison with the joy we felt on meeting our excellent friends - - - *the trades*. I, therefore, reserve some detached occurrences of the voyage for my next letter, in order not to interrupt the harmony of this ; which I wish to conclude, as it began, with happily terminating the voyage.

In the course of our passage, we fell in, occasionally, with stragglers of our unfortunate *Armada*, and remained in company with them, until we were again separated by a storm, a thick fog, or the night. A few days before we reached Carlisle-bay, we were joined by No. 4. transport, with troops, and a band of music on board. This was a happy rencontre, and afforded us a most pleasing novelty. The day had been fine ; the evening was mild and clear ; and gentle Cynthia, with her silver beams, seemed to aid the general stillness that prevailed. Every thing conspired in favor of the music, and the notes of the various instruments, coming to us across the water, were so sweetly soft and melodious as to convey the idea of celestial harmony. We listened in raptures, and, feeling quite en-

chanted with her delightful sounds, we hoped to continue in the society of our new companion, during the remainder of the voyage : but the night concealed us from each other, and, when Aurora again opened the gates of the east, we perceived, with strong regret, that we had, already, to lament our harmonic associate.

When any strange vessel appeared in sight, it, commonly, excited some apprehension, from our being alone, and badly armed ; but, fortunately, the wide ocean seemed to be the path, only, of friends. In latitude 37 we descried a foreign sail, but we quickly discovered that she was not of warlike aspect, and, therefore, were desirous of speaking her, in the hope of ascertaining our longitude. On approaching her, for this purpose, we hoisted our ensign as a signal ; to which she replied by a white flag, with a red stripe, implying that she belonged to Spain. We were pleased to find her an ally ; and, employing a Portuguese, whom we chanced to have on board, to hail her, we discovered that she was from the Havannah, bound to Malaga ; but

this was all the information we could obtain, for, unluckily, our Portuguese sailor was not able to render his questions, concerning the longitude, intelligible to the Spaniards.

On the morning of the day before we made the land, we spake the *Britannia* transport, and learned that, during the preceding night, she had been boarded by a sloop of war—one of the Barbadoes cruizers, and had received information that she was within sixty leagues of the island. This intelligence was peculiarly opportune, as we were in no certainty regarding our longitude, and must have proceeded in fear, during the night, or have created further delay by shortening sail.

It was a great advantage to us being on board a West India trader, for the ships built for this service, being intended for a hot climate, are constructed with much attention to the comfort and accommodation of passengers, and have all the conveniences of ports, scuttle-holes, window-blinds, awnings, &c.; from the want of which, many of the transports were, distressingly, close and oppressive.

As soon as we had entered the trades, our ports and scuttles were beat open, and we had a free circulation of air, through the cabin, night and day. The windows were likewise opened; and, as we sailed before the wind, the Venetian blinds admitted the breeze, while they excluded the rays of the sun. From these means we were kept pleasantly cool, below; and, when upon deck, we were protected by a canvas awning, under which we had a shaded walk, ventilated by a free current of air. Having several bathing tubs, on board, we had, likewise, the comfort—the luxury I might say, of plunging into seawater every morning; and, in order not to meet the torrefaction of these burning regions, with all the rigid fibre, and strong vascular action of Europe, I have adopted the plan of using a very abstemious diet, and have submitted to a short preparatory course of medicine. My comrades smile at the precaution, but, *although doctors may disagree*, I shall hope, on some future day, to exhibit, to you, the good effects of this early discipline. Wine, 'tis said by many, will *counteract* the heat of the climate. Let those take

it who think so—my faculties have not yet enabled me to comprehend the ingenious doctrine which would employ fire to extinguish heat—nor has my sagacity taught me how to quench a flame by the addition of oil, or æther !

Many days previous to our arrival in Carlisle bay, the increase of temperature had brought out upon our skins that troublesome eruption called *prickly heat*. Our bodies were covered with it, and the irritation and itching it occasioned were intolerable. Our companion, Dr. Cleghorn, being an early sufferer from it, demanded of those who had been accustomed to the West Indies, how long his skin was to be thus tormented? So long, good doctor, as you remain in health, was the reply ! Upon which, with additional rubbing and scratching, the doctor jocosely, although somewhat impatiently exclaimed, in the accent of his country, “Faith captain, and would you carry us into never-ceasing torment? ’Bout ship and tack for England immediately.”

On the morning of the 10th instant the boatswain descried the highest points of Barbadoes, when *land! land!* was instantly echoed throughout the ship, to the great joy of all on board; and to the boatswain's profit, who, being the first that founded the glad tidings, became entitled to the customary fee of a bottle of rum, or brandy. It required the eye of a sailor to distinguish the all-delighting terra firma, amidst the clouds: the passengers looked, and looked in vain! a nearer approach of yet some leagues, was necessary, to render it visible to the eye of a landsman, and when we, at length, discerned it, the earth appeared, only, as the more fixed of the clouds—forming a dark streak a little above the horizon. This streak grew, gradually, more and more distinct, till, breaking as we advanced, it became unequal, and assumed the form of mountains; and, at length, the appearance of land. Soon we discovered it to be the northern point of the island of Barbadoes; but Carlisle-bay is to the south: we had, therefore, to coast round nearly half the extent of the island, before we could

reach the harbour. This delay afforded us a good opportunity of viewing the island. We stood near in, and could observe, distinctly, the objects on shore. I took my seat upon deck, and with an anxious eye, aided by the telescope, minutely, examined every thing we passed. The mind, ever active, generally forms to itself some image of the things we hear spoken of, before any opportunity occurs of seeing them. Often the picture is very incorrect and extravagant; but, upon the present occasion, I was pleased to find that I had formed to myself a tolerably accurate copy of the West Indies, from the descriptions I had heard and read. In particular the appearance of the fields, and of the slaves, labouring with the whip at their backs, had been painted, very correctly, in my imagination; for, I now saw them, in reality, what my mind had long represented them.

Our coasting view of the island was not the most favorable; for a nakedness, which Barbadoes does not possess, appeared to prevail: nor did the general verdure seem to equal our expectation: houses, huts, wind-

-mills, and sugar-works, although plentifully distributed, in patches, about the island, did not present the scenery, nor the air of richness and comfort we had expected. There seemed to be a want of inclosures, and a deficiency of trees and hedges. The buildings looked bare and exposed, and there was a want of that protecting shade, for the cattle, which our feelings had deemed requisite in such a climate. The houses, devoid of ornament, and without chimnies, conveyed the idea of barns: nor could we associate them in the picture of wealth and abundance which had been called up in our minds. We lamented that the numerous windmills, houses, and other buildings we saw, were not more protected by the deep shading foliage of tropical vegetation. Had a variety of trees been interspersed, or had the branching silk-cotton, or stately mountain-cabbage, contributed their shelter, the appearance of comfort had been preserved, and the picturesque effect rendered more striking. The land is considerably varied, being hilly and unequal; and from the general view, in sailing along the coast, it appears to rise into two or three

distinct tables, which elevate themselves abruptly, one above another.

We made the entrance of the harbour, just as the sun was sinking into his watery bed, for the night; and it was in debate whether we could fetch in before it grew dark, when it was suddenly decided against us, by the wind shifting and coming round *directly a-head*. This we learned was the land breeze. In these regions the trade-wind blows from the sea, during the day; but this commonly subsides, as the sun goes down, and a contrary breeze sets in, from the land, which continues to blow throughout the night.

Being prevented from coming to anchor, we stood off and on, at the harbour's mouth, until morning, when we discovered that we had no cause of regret in this additional delay; for all the beauties of Carlisle-bay were, now, exhibited to us—not only under the still light of the morning, but brightened by the golden rays of a rising sun. Had we gone in at night, we must have lost a most enchanting prospect; and the loss had been

irremediable, for, after the eye had been accustomed to the rich foliage, the houses, the towns, the fields, and all the peculiarity of tropical scenery, the impression we now felt could never have been excited. The mind was, at this moment, in a state to enjoy them : the novelty was great, and every object striking. We had been long at sea, and the eye sought, eagerly, the shore. Land was anxiously desired : the view of it opened to us very favorably ; and, from all the various circumstances conspiring to its improvement, the prospect was rendered more delightful than it could have been at any other period.

The harbour is a fine open bay, the whole of which, with its varied shores, were before the eye : many ships were riding at anchor, and a multitude of boats and small vessels were sailing and rowing to and fro. The two points of land, at the entrance, serve as a defence ; while they augment the beauty of the harbour. On one of them appears a formidable battery, together with an extensive barrack for troops : on the other is a fine grove of mountain cabbage, and coco nut

trees. Through the shipping at the bottom of the bay, are seen numbers of neat cottages; among which are interspersed various tropical trees, affording the protecting shelter of their umbrageous summits. On the south-west shore stands Bridge-town, the capital of the island; and on the north-east, upon high ground, is a new and handsome quadrangle of stone barracks, with the military hospital and other buildings of St. Anne's Hill. Nor is the prospect confined to these limits. It extends still wider, and in addition to the water, the shipping, and the numerous other objects, immediately before the eye, the back ground, beyond the bay, and above the town, forms a rich and extensive landscape. The land is seen above the houses, the trees, and the topmasts of the ships, rising to a great distance, clothed in all the richness of its tropical apparel. Verdant fields of sugar, of coffee, and of cotton; fine groves, dark with luxuriant foliage; country villas; clusters of negro huts, windmills, and sugar-works, all present themselves to diversify and enliven the picture. Such was the scene that appeared before us as we sailed into

Carlisle-bay. You, whose idol is nature, in all her forms, will feel a friendship for the evening land-breeze which so happily lengthened a voyage, before too long.

Adieu.

LETTER XIX.

Ceremony of cleaning and painting West India ships. Feelings of sailors respecting the sailing of their vessels. Tobacco an universal cordial among sailors. Specimen of œconomy in a young tar. Negro œconomy. Baptismal ceremony on crossing the tropic. Author and his comrades work at the cap-sun. An accident happens to Dr. Clegborn. Harpoons and other instruments prepared for striking fish. Peculiar habit of porpoises. Sharks, dolphins, and flying fish used as food. Stupidity of the Shark. Splendid appearance of a shoal of dolphins. Remarks upon the structure, and motion of the wings of the flying fish. Small flying fish an indication of approaching the land. Temperature of the water of the Atlantic. Lights produced by the ship at night. Small rainbows upon the surface of the ocean. Appearance of the sun and moon at sea, within the tropics. West India sky. Evening clouds.

Barbadoes, Feb. 1

PREVIOUS to our coming into harbour, from our late voyage, the ship's company was, for several days, busily occupied in cleaning, painting, and adorning the vessel; and we learned that it is a general custom to dress the West India ships in a new jacket, during the steady sailing of running down the trades, in order that they may appear clean,

and in the best condition, while remaining in the harbours of the islands : and that in this the sailors have a degree of pride, which excites a general spirit of emulation—every captain wishing to render his vessel the object of attraction and admiration. In consequence of this custom the West India harbours become quite a drawing room of fine-dressed merchantmen. Here each ship exhibits her best apparel, and vying with the others, holds out her lures to catch the eye of every beholder. The decoration is universal. From head to stern, not a plank, a mast, a yard, nor scarcely a rope escapes ; each receives a full-dress coat of paint, or is made new with a black varnish of tar. The painting of the more prominent parts of our ship being completed, the progress of cleaning, and new-dressing was extended to such minutiae as to become very highly ridiculous. A painting mania seemed to have seized the whole crew, and every one was up to his elbows in grease, tar, and paint. The capstan—the quarter-boards—the binocles—the hen-koops—every thing around us was bedaubed. The cannon—the hand-spikes—the capstan bars—the barrels

—the buckets—the very handle of the pump—all were painted—all put into one uniform of black and yellow. Not an iron ring, a bolt, nor a nail was neglected—not even the cannon balls escaped—and, that nothing should be omitted, the inner surface of the water buckets, regardless of health, were dressed with their poisonous coating. Never was system more universally observed; nor idle excess rendered more conspicuous. Not an inch, nor an atom, but appeared in Lord Sheffield's livery; black and yellow prevailed from the highest point of the masts, down to the very water's edge. Nothing can convey to you a stronger idea of the fine steady sailing, in a trade wind, than to know that the outer part of the ship is painted at sea, by men hanging in ropes, at her sides, while she is proceeding with full sails, on her passage.

The sailors have another, and yet stronger pride, which respects the sailing of their vessel: like every man's horse,—every sailor's ship is *the best in the world*,—every captain commands the quickest sailing vessel of the fleet; and *he* would cease to merit the honor

of a jacket, who could be brought to acknowledge, however true it might be, that his ship was a bad sailer: for, however manifest this shall appear, an excuse is never wanting. She is in bad trim—she is too much astern—too much ahead—is too deep—too light—the breeze is not from her point—she fails best upon a wind—before the wind—she makes best way in a gale—in a light breeze: so that be the weather, and the attendant circumstances whatever they may, here is a *side-wind* for each of them; and a son of the ocean is always expert enough to appropriate them in favor of his vessel, so as to guard her, at every point, against the imputation of being a dull sailer. It happened that our ship was found not to advance in proportion to the breeze; it was, therefore, deemed expedient to give her a new main-top-gallant mast; and this was put up, in the night time, with as much secrecy as if the failure of the whole expedition had hung upon its disclosure. We, afterwards, discovered that it was done, in the dark, not to conceal it from the passengers, only, but from the ship's company of a vessel, which happened, then, to be sailing near us;

and with which the Lord Sheffield was, secretly, vying in her progress.

Among other circumstances, perhaps as little worth noting, but which amused an idle moment upon the passage, was a remarkable instance of œconomy, which we observed in a young Scottish sailor. The tars have, universally, a fondness for tobacco: to deprive them of food—of drink—nay, even of their loved grog, is not so distressing to them, as to debar them of their cud. To those who are acquainted with the properties of this plant, and with the habits of the Turks respecting opium, this will not seem wonderful; for its effects being those of a strong cordial, they, who frequently use it, will necessarily feel a great degree of languor from being deprived of it. From the unusual length to which the passage was extended, our sailors' stock of tobacco had become exhausted before they reached Barbadoes. They, consequently, suffered depression of spirits, restlessness, languor, and all the usual indications of debility. They felt, severely, the abstraction of their accustomed cordial—and would have submitted to

many sacrifices to have obtained it. At this moment of distress and want, the wary *Sandy Cameron* opened his store, and, in the general eagerness to procure it, retailed tobacco to his messmates at an enormous profit. Some pawned their shoes, some their shirts, some their jackets: some gave their food, some their grog—every thing was devoted to purchase this filthy herb. *Sandy* became a perfect *marchand de tabac*—and was, thereby, enabled to accumulate clothes and property to no trifling amount. Four ounces of tobacco were given for a jacket valued at seven or eight shillings—other articles of use or apparel were bartered at a similar rate; but, from some accident, it was, at length, discovered that young Cameron's store was, mostly, the produce of a very filthy piece of œconomy; *Sandy* having collected it, by picking up the old cuds of his messmates, during the passage—which he had dried and preserved for future use: so that the sailors were now paying extravagantly, for the privilege of again sucking, what had already been between their teeth.

This dirty occurrence happening on

board led the captain to mention a habit, sometimes practised among the negroes in the West Indies, which is not less distinguished for its filthiness and æconomy. The blacks, both men and women, are very fond of rum, and sometimes, when they can only procure a single dram, the wife, as a mark of tenderness and attachment, satisfies herself by warming her mouth with it, and, affectionately, employs that as a glass for conveying the rum to her husband; who receives it, from her, in due kindness, beak to beak, as pigeons feed their young; and thus, with extraordinary æconomy, the single dram is made to serve both man and wife; and sometimes it is, even, said to go through the mouths of the whole family.

A day or two after we had entered into the latitude of the trade-wind, we had to cross the tropic; which was an occasion of great mirth and festivity. The usual ceremonies were performed—the usual honors paid to old Neptune, and all was holiday. The great deity of the ocean, accompanied by his queen-rib of the waters, ascended from the deep,

in order to welcome us to his tropical abode, and to witness *the baptism* of such of his children who had not, already, done homage at his font. This is a ceremony which is, commonly, thought to be ludicrous : but, in the way it is conducted by the rough tars, it becomes a very dirty and severe process. It is extended to every person on board, who has not, before, been within the tropics, varying only in its mode of application, and in its severities.

The old sailors are careful to discover, in the course of the passage, which of their messmates have not undergone the discipline of this tropical baptism ; and on this day, all who are marked for the ceremony, are led upon deck, one by one, blindfolded. In this state the young sailor is made to seat himself upon a small narrow plank, laid across a large tub of salt water, or upon the edge of the tub itself, and, in this perilous situation, they administer to him a long and ridiculous oath ; then offer him a glass of gin, by way of cordial, which he is compelled to drink, and finds it to be only a glass of salt water. They, then,

smear his face with a nasty compound of grease, tar, and stinking oil, taking care in the operation, to force some of it into his mouth. The next step is to shave this off, and the razor employed, for this purpose, is commonly a piece of an old iron hoop, beat full of notches. The filth being in part scraped from his chin, with this rough instrument, the baptismal process is completed by the plank, upon which he is seated, being suddenly withdrawn, and the young initiated plunged head and ears into the tub of water; where he is made to lie kicking and sprawling for a considerable time; after which he is permitted to rise from his briny birth; when his eyes are unveiled—he washes his countenance, and issues forth a privileged son of old Neptune—*free* to range in the tropical seas. If he contends, or offers any resistance, he is treated with three or four dippings, instead of one; he, therefore, finds it best not be refractory, and smothers his wrath in the secret pleasure of witnessing a similar process imposed upon the rest of his messmates. Every one, whether sailor or landman, is

called upon to undergo this christening ceremony, the task of initiation.

As passengers we were honored with a visit from father Neptune and his spouse, to welcome us to their tropical dwelling, and to announce to us the propriety and necessity of the baptismal vow: but we compromised the discipline of dipping and shaving, by offering the tribute of a few gallons of rum; and petitioning the beauteous Amphitrite to intercede in our behalf. Nevertheless, we were taught that it would be prudent to remain, quietly, in the cabin, during this briny christening of the sailors.

The servants were led by curiosity to visit the deck, hoping to witness the ceremony without becoming, themselves, the objects of it: but they were speedily presented with a complete washing of sea-water, and obliged to beat a hasty retreat, in order to escape the shaving: one of them, who was a great coxcomb in his dress, grew violently enraged, and felt highly indignant that the sailors

should dare to wet and spoil his clothes ; and in his anger he ran down below to arm himself with a sword, then returning upon deck, swore that he would run the first man through the body, who should throw water upon him, again : but scarcely had he said the words, and brandished his sabre, before several buckets of water were dashed upon his head and shoulders, by some sailors who had placed themselves in the main-top. The poor man stormed violently, swore, stamped, and vowed vengeance. The sailors, laughing at his impotent rage, continued to pour down bucket after bucket. He was unable to climb up the shrouds ; and they diverted themselves at his wrath and distress, until, at length, seeing that they defied all his threats, he again returned to the cabin, loading them with imprecations, and, loudly, vowing vengeance, unmindful that his best remedy was to change his clothes, wipe himself dry, and let his choler subside. Custom is absolute, and, in the hands of such hardy ministers, it were folly to oppose its despotic government.

After reaching the latitude of the trade wind we passed very little of our time in the cabin ; nor, throughout the whole passage, did we neglect to take our exercise upon deck, whenever the weather would permit ; occasionally also in order to divert the sad indolence of our inactive life, we gave assistance at the capstan, or in working the pump, or pulling the ropes ; but one of these moments of industry had nearly cost Dr. Cleghorn his life. A large block, exposed to excessive purchase in getting up one of the masts, broke from its rope as we were heaving at the capstan bars, and, flying to a great height with violent rapidity, struck the doctor on the head in its fall. Happily he was not within the circle of its full force, or, beyond all doubt, he had been killed on the spot. Moderate as it was, the blow being received from only the edge of the block, in its fall to the deck, it rendered him insensible for some time, and cut an alarming wound through the integuments quite to the bone. On recovering from the comatose state, which had followed the blow, he had no knowledge how the accident had happened ; and when the

broken block was presented to him he was struck with surprize at his escape. The wound has since healed kindly, and the doctor suffers, from it, no other inconvenience than, like poor Patrick, wearing, in his forehead, an honorable and warlike scar.

During our fine tropical sailing we were frequently amused in observing the immense shoals of porpoises, dolphins, and flying fish, which, from time to time, assembled about the ship. The frightful shark and spouting grampus also made us frequent visits.

Harpoons and other instruments, called gigs, or grains, were prepared for the purpose of taking these inhabitants of the ocean. They are formidable weapons of iron, made with barbed points, and at the time of using them, a wooden handle, loaded with lead, is affixed to them, together with a long cord; and they are struck into the animal while he is swimming at the side of the ship. If they penetrate beyond the barb he is unable to free himself from the instrument, and is turned

upon his back, by the weight of the lead in the handle, and consequently has no power to escape. Often the iron points are bent double without entering the animal; and sometimes they are thrown out by his struggles, from not having penetrated deep enough, and leave him to escape with his wound. This we saw happen to a large porpoise while he was swimming amidst a shoal of his species so numerous as to darken the sea; when, instantly, every individual of them abandoned the ship, not to protect or console their wounded brother, but, according to the unfriendly habit of these hideous and rapacious animals, to pursue him as their prey. The flying fish, the shark, and the dolphin, are all used, by the sailors, as food. The shark is a most stupid animal—unlike other fishes he disregards being seen, and flies not from people who appear before him, nor is intimidated at things falling near to him, or even upon him in the water. Does this arise from a deficiency of nervous sensibility, or from a consciousness that he is armed against the objects he commonly meets? By throwing out to him oc-

casionally a piece of fat pork, he may be induced to continue, at the side of the ship, while a rope, let down into the water, is passed over his head, and drawn tight round his body in order to take him alive, and if it happens to slip off, he is stupid enough to remain until it is fixed a second time. We caught a very large one in this manner; and also took a smaller one with the hook, which the sailors consumed as delicate food.

The shoals of dolphins are often so immense as to convert the sea into a kind of rich and dazzling mine, in which the lively interchanges of colour out-rival all the splendour of brilliants and gold.

The novelty of immense multitudes of fish darting from the sea and taking wing in the air, you will believe attracted our attention. To speak of fishes flying might seem to be a traveller's tale; we were, therefore, led to a minute investigation of the fact. We watched them with a sceptical eye, and, at many different times, before we admitted even the evidence of our senses. It appeared possible

that their short flight might be the effect of a single muscular effort, supported by the expansion of long membranous fins ; and this opinion became strengthened from observing them, occasionally, touch the water, as if to gain new force from its resistance, and then rise again, and fly as far as before. But, upon regarding them with strict attention, we observed their wings employed, like those of birds, in fluttering motion as they flew. We saw them change their course, from a direct line ; we perceived them rise and fall in their flight, to surmount the waves they met, and remarked that they often continued their progress to the distance of two or three hundred yards, without touching the water : at length two or three of them flew on board the ship, and, striking against the masts, fell dead upon the deck ; this afforded us an opportunity of satisfying our doubts ; and after very minutely examining their external form, we further assured ourselves, by carefully dissecting them ; and we have now no hesitation in saying that fishes - - - - *do fly* ! The wings are very long, : arising from behind the gills, they lie folded at the sides nearly the whole

length of the fish, being formed of several fine cartilages, and a thin transparent membrane not unlike the wing of a bat. At the insertion, near the gills, they are narrow, but become considerably wider towards their extremities. When used in flying they are raised from the side, and expanded, by the cartilages separating from each other, and stretching out the membrane which covers them. They are not connected with the body by extensive muscular insertions; but are united by a ligamentous membrane. Two small muscles pass into each wing, terminating in strong ligaments. These serve to give them the command of the wing, but are not calculated to support long and powerful action. The fish is about the size of a herring. They are caught, in great numbers, near Barbadoes, where they are pickled, and salted, and used as a very common food.

The day before we made the land we met with shoals of flying fish of much smaller size than those we had commonly seen—not larger, indeed, than sprats. On rising out of the water, in large bodies at a time, they caused

a sound like the splashing of rain, which being heard by the captain, he instantly exclaimed "*Ha ! bravo ! land, land ! here are the little "splashers, we can't be far from the land !"*"— This small race of flying fish, it seems, is never observed at any great distance from the shore, nor in the deeper parts of the Atlantic : wherefore their appearance is assumed as a sure prognostic of a speedy approach to the land.

We observed upon the passage, that after the great heat of the day, the water of the Atlantic was somewhat warmer than the circumambient air. In latitude 14° , at 10 o'clock at night, the thermometer stood at $72\frac{1}{2}$, and upon being put into a bucket of fresh-drawn sea water it rose to 73.

Like all young sailors we felt our attention strongly attracted by the phenomenon of the lights produced in the sea, at night, from the ship beating her way through the water. We often witnessed them in a very striking degree, and were, frequently, led to the forepart of the ship to view them in their brightest splendour; for, there, the ship appeared to be

sailing through liquid flames. On every side the lights were vivid and beautiful, but at the forecattle we saw the pitchings and plunges of the vessel strike out wide flashes, resembling sheets of fire. The great noise at the head of the ship, likewise added to the effect, and it required very little help of the imagination to create a belief that we, actually, heard the sparks and crackling of more destructive flames. At the stern these lights appear as if they poured from the vessel in bright streams of fire, extending to a considerable distance in her wake.

We drew up buckets of water, occasionally, to the deck, and found that by agitating it, either with the hand or a piece of wood, we could excite the same luminous appearance: but, after disturbing it for a short time, this effect ceased; and no degree of agitation was sufficient to renew it in the same water. You know the various theories and speculations which have been offered in explanation of this phenomenon, I need not, therefore, swell my letter by repeating them.

The beautiful appearance of the iris resting in a number of small circles upon the surface of the ocean, also frequently attracted our notice. These were only seen near the ship, and it will occur to you that they arose from the minute particles of water, beat off by the vessel, dividing the rays of light, and causing them to fall upon the sea in the form of rich and distinct rainbows. They are often extremely brilliant, and are seen, as it were, lying in numbers upon the water.

The very beautiful rising and setting of the sun and the moon were the frequent and admired subjects of our contemplation. Viewed from a West India sea, the surface of these orbs does not appear, like a mere plane fixed in the heavens, as in Europe, but their convexity, and globular form are seen very distinctly. When rising they appear as detached globes protruding from the deep: at setting they resemble distinct spheres sinking, or rather dropping, divested of their rays, into the ocean.

The moon is brighter than in England, and reflects a clearer light. When only a few days old the whole orb is visible—not decked in uniform brightness, as when it is at the full, but with the great body in shade, while the horned edge, alone, is dressed in silver.

The appearance of the western sky was likewise an object of novelty to us. By day the whole canopy is one fine azure expanse, bright and unclouded; but, at evening, dark mountainous clouds accumulate, and, gathering into deep heavy masses, impend in awful majesty of form over the horizon.

LETTER XX.

Author continues to address his friend, but cannot send away his letters. Lord Sheffield visited by anxious crowds in quest of news. Perilous state of St. Vincent and Grenada. Guadaloupe reinforced. French gasconade. Enemy's frigates and cruisers infest the coast of Barbadoes. Loss of the Læda frigate. Brunswick detached with troops to St. Vincent. The lost Stanley ship in Carlisle Bay, also nine or ten other transports of the December convoy. Author and his comrades go on shore at Barbadoes. Remarks upon the novelty of the scene. Visit to an American slave ship - - - to a Liverpool Guinea-man.

Carlisle Bay, Feb.

IN pursuance of my promise I still direct my pen towards you, notwithstanding the uncertainty when I may be able to send away my letters. On account of the repeated disasters of the fleet, and the sad delays that have occurred, you will believe that we, who have had the good fortune to complete our passage, are extremely anxious to make known to our friends that we are in safety : but, as though the distaff of the fates were thrown out to entangle us in vexation, no opportunity offers of conveying intelligence to Europe. A packet

is established to fail, from England every fortnight ; but none has reached Barbadoes, for many weeks past ; and the inhabitants are looking out, with anxious solicitude, for several which remain due : nor is it expected that any mail will be made up for England until some of these arrive.

Should any merchantman fail, I will avail myself of that opportunity to forward to you this letter, together with those written upon the passage : but of this I have very little hope, as no unprotected vessel can venture to sea without extreme peril, on account of the enemy's cruisers.

The period is critical and important. News from each shore of the Atlantic, to its opposite, is sought with the most lively anxiety. While you are looking to us for tidings of ourselves, of our scattered fleet, and of endangered islands ; we, unable to relieve your suspense, are looking to you, with no less anxiety for intelligence of England and of Europe. The avidity for news, which, here, displays itself, is vivid beyond all I can express.

Our anchor was not dropped, indeed we had scarcely entered the harbour before a variety of people came out, in boats, to meet us, and, scrambling on board, asked the news in such hurried solicitude as scarcely to wait a reply, before each question was followed by another. What news? what news? what news of the fleet? what news of England? what news from the Continent? were all uttered in such rapid succession, that the only answer we could properly make, served as a general reply - - - "None! we have been nine weeks at sea, and have every intelligence to seek—none to give."

Our abrupt visitors were extremely disappointed, when, instead of being able to satisfy them, they found that we were equally solicitous to demand news of our convoy, of the Islands, and of the sailing of the packet for England. You will readily imagine that from the critical state of Europe, on the one hand, and the perilous situation of the Islands, on the other, together with the long interrupted communication between them, each party, partaking all the anxiety of the period, was

more desirous to ask questions, than to offer replies.

We could impart nothing satisfactory ; and the information we acquired was not very gratifying. The following were the leading circumstances which we collected at the moment. Grenada, we were told, was, almost wholly, in possession of the brigands : St. Vincent in imminent danger from the Charibs : and Guadaloupe, if not St. Lucie, so strengthened by reinforcements from France as to bid us defiance. As a specimen of French gasconade, I may tell you what is reported to be the present language of that insolent democratic tyrant, Victor Hugues : “ Let them come ! let the general lead hither his troops ! we will invite them ashore ; nay ! we will lay planks to their vessels that they may not wet their feet in visiting us, and when we have them here we will teach them who is Victor : we will give the officers their favorite toast, and accommodate them with speedy promotion.” Such is said to be the idle boasting of this man, in consequence of the reinforcements lately arrived from Europe.

Two French frigates, and hordes of privateers had been cruising, with too much success, against our scattered transports and merchantmen. The frigates had lately been daring enough to look into the harbour of Carlisle Bay, and the Charon of 44 guns armed *en flute*, one of the earliest arrivals of the Spithead fleet, had been sent out, with La Pique frigate, in pursuit of them.

The Læda frigate, employed to convoy a fleet of victuallers from Cork, had, been upset in a gale, and, unhappily, sunk to the bottom, with all hands on board, seven only excepted. These had since arrived in one of the victuallers, at Barbadoes; but several of the convoy, left unprotected by this fatal accident, had been captured by the enemy's cruisers.

The commander in chief was still unheard of; nor was there any accurate intelligence of the fleet, although a few straggling vessels had arrived.

This was the sum of the news that greet-

ted our arrival at Barbadoes. But gloomy as it was, the distressful feelings it produced were, in some degree, alleviated by our learning, soon afterwards, that the Brunswick, which had been ordered to proceed with troops to the relief of St. Vincent, had arrived most opportunely to save the island; and that the Stanley, which had sailed with the first fleet in November, and was supposed to have been lost, during the disastrous storm which arose in the channel, had arrived safe in Carlisle bay, on Christmas day, being the only ship of the *November* convoy that made good her passage; and, further, that nine or ten of the vessels of the *December* convoy had reached Barbadoes in safety, with upwards of two thousand troops on board.

The inhabitants, who best knew the state of the neighbouring islands, were extremely anxious to see these troops employed; and, on this account, they were looking out, with double anxiety, for the arrival of the commander in chief.

The delight we felt on the glad occasion

of setting our feet, again, upon terra firma was more exquisite than I can express; and it was highly augmented by the novelty that surrounded us. The houses, the streets, the people, the fruit, fish, and vegetables, the trees, the fields, every thing before us, was new. The very means of labour and amusement were novel, and all combined to indicate the change we had made—all bespoke our removal from a northern to a tropical latitude. We gazed on all we met, and all we passed. Objects which, at other moments, had been trifling and unimportant, now called forth our attention. The eye of curiosity suffered nothing to escape. Ideas crowded upon our minds in such rapid succession, that the confusion of chaos seemed to be renewed. The universal metamorphosis that surrounded us prevented our digesting the scene, which presented itself, into any thing of order or arrangement: yet was the whole uncommonly gratifying; and, without being able to discriminate, we contemplated, in a sort of pleasing reverie, this seeming change of worlds. Complex as are the feelings of such a moment, I have often wished that they

were less fleeting, or could more frequently recur ; for, upon such occasions, the mind seems to enjoy unparalleled delight ; and to dwell with rapture, on objects which, under other circumstances, would pass unheeded by.

We took our umbrellas in our hands, by way of parasols, but found less occasion for them than we had been taught to expect ; for although the heat was greater, by several degrees, in Bridge Town than in the harbour, we did not feel, from it, any degree of languor or oppression. A pleasant breeze counteracted the ardent rays of the sun ; and, at our first visit, we rambled, for two hours, about the town, to the barracks, and into the fields, with far less inconvenience from heat, than I have often experienced in the close and sultry days of England.

It will be quite within your recollection how long, and how much I have wished to visit the ships trading to Africa, and to witness personally, the manner of treating those poor beings of sable skin, who are torn from their

native home, by the iron-hand of commerce, to be transported to a home of slavery ; and you will be pleased to learn that in this wish, I have had an early opportunity of being gratified. A slave ship, belonging to North America, and bound to Savanna in Georgia, had arrived from the coast of Guinea just before we came into harbour, and was lying very near to us, with a cargo of negroes on board. Fearing she might sail for America, and being unwilling to lose the first occasion that offered, of administering to a curiosity which beat strong in our breasts, Master, Cleg-horn, and myself took off a boat, the morning after we came to anchor, and went to visit the Guinea-man. We considered ourselves fortunate in finding both the master and mate of the ship disposed to shew us every civility, and to indulge us in ready reply to the questions which our curiosity suggested.

A little before they made Carlisle bay they had been taken out of their ship, and detained a whole night, on board an English frigate, while their papers were examined, under the suspicion that the vessel and cargo

were Dutch property : but the property being proved to be American, they were released, and the ship is now taking in water, preparatory to pursuing her voyage down to the state of Georgia.

The cargo consisted of a hundred and thirty slaves, of whom two-thirds were males, and one-third females. The two sexes were kept separate by a partition, or bulk-head, built from side to side, across the ship; allotting *the waist* to the men, and to the women, the *quarterdeck*. A great majority of them were very young, being from ten to eighteen years of age. We were pleased to observe that an air of cheerfulness and contentment prevailed among them. In a few only we remarked despondency, and dejection of countenance. Both sexes were without apparel, having only a narrow band of blue cloth put round the waist, and brought to fasten before, so as to serve the office of the fig-leaf, worn by our first parents, in the fruitful garden of Eden. As we walked through the different groups of them, they fixed their eyes upon us, with seeming curiosity; and some of the

boys, like those of fairer skin, were inclined to be playful, and to exhibit youthful tricks. One or two of the females, unchecked by the reserve of education, occasionally glanced an expressive look, or displayed a significant gesture. Many of them had marks upon the skin which appeared to have been made with a cutting instrument. These, we learned, were distinctive of the nation to which they had belonged. Some had their teeth cut, or filed to sharp points, giving them a very hideous, and canine appearance. They looked well fed and healthy, although some of them had an eruption, called the cra-cra upon the skin.

Their sleeping births were the naked boards. Divided into two crowded parties, they reposed, during the night, upon the bare planks below—the males on the *main-deck*—the females upon the deck of the *aft cabin*. In the day-time they were not allowed to remain in the place where they had slept, but were kept mostly upon the open deck, where they were made to exercise, and encouraged by the music of their loved banjar, to dancing and cheerfulness.

We saw them dance, and heard them sing. In dancing they scarcely moved their feet, but threw about their arms, and twisted and writhed their bodies into a multitude of disgusting and indecent attitudes. Their song was a wild and savage yell, devoid of all softness and harmony, and loudly chanted in harsh monotony.

Their food is chiefly rice, which they prepare by plain and simple boiling. At the time of messing they squat round the bowl in large bodies, upon their heels and haunches, like monkeys, each putting his paws into the platter to claw out the rice with his fingers. We saw several of them employed in beating the red husks off the rice, which was done by pounding the grain in wooden mortars, with wooden pestles, sufficiently long to allow them to stand upright while beating in mortars placed at their feet. This appeared to be a labour of cheerfulness. They beat the pestle in tune to the song, and seemed happy; yet nothing of industry marked their toil, for the pounding was performed by, indolently, raising the

pestle and then leaving it to fall from its own weight.

I am most happy to conclude my report of this visit by informing you that we discovered no marks of those horrors and cruelties, said to be practised on board the ships occupied in this sad traffic of human flesh ; and which are represented as so frightfully augmenting the manifold ills of slavery. Chains, stripes, and severities did not seem to have been in the catalogue of means employed in conveying these poor Africans to their American masters. Our minds, necessarily, suffered in contemplating the degrading practices of civilized beings towards the less cultivated brethren of their species : but the eye was not shocked by the abuses of tyranny and inhumanity. The comfort and health of the slaves were promoted with every care. Being fond of washing in cold water, they were encouraged to the free use of it ; and their persons, as well as the whole of the ship, were kept remarkably clean. They were plentifully fed ; and, in the day-time, were dispersed about the ship, so as to be prevented, as much as possible, from

assembling together, in close unwholesome crowds. Mirth and gaiety were promoted among them: they were roused to bodily exercise, and care was used to divert their minds from dwelling upon their change of state, and loss of home: and I may truly say, that a more general air of contentment reigned among them than could have been expected. While many were dancing and singing, and playing together, others were giving their assistance in working the ship; and, we even learned that several of them had made themselves highly useful on the passage, and were already becoming expert sailors,

They all seemed to regard the master of the vessel more in affection than fear; and, although strictly obedient, they did not appear to be at all under the influence of terror. Crowded in some degree, they, necessarily, must be, particularly in the place where they slept; but every attention was paid to prevent the injury which might derive from it; and to keep them in health.

We went down below to see their place

of repose, where the hard planks formed one common bed, and each individual employed his arm as his pillow. The men could not stand between decks, without stooping ; and when they lay down, the boards were so closely spread, that it was scarcely possible to set a foot between their naked bodies. They were always taken upon deck early in the morning, and the sleeping birth was thoroughly cleaned and washed ; but still it was highly offensive to European olfactories ; and plainly indicated, that were it not for the great attention paid to cleanliness and ventilation, disease must inevitably be generated. Their nakedness is, perhaps, their best security ; for although they had neither bed-clothes, nor personal covering, nor any kind of baggage, or furniture in the place, we perceived that all the cleaning and airing employed could not subdue the stench created by their sleeping together in such crowded heaps.

Although they are fond of washing, and seem to have some sense of personal cleanliness, they have none of cleanliness of place, nor of common decency : for, notwithstanding

the strictest injunctions against it, they cannot always be prevented from the filthy habit of depositing their natural excretions upon the spot where they sleep.

The wool of their heads forms a thick cover for vermin, of which they have, commonly, a swarming abundance ; therefore to prevent this, and to further the rules of cleanliness, all their heads had been shaved : but this, we were told, had deprived them of one great source of occupation and amusement ; it being a singular pleasure to them to sit down in pairs, for hours together, to enjoy the social feast of picking each other's heads, and afterwards twisting and plaiting the wool into a variety of forms.

The pleasure we had experienced from finding these poor blacks in a state of apparent contentment, and, with respect to the reported cruelty, enjoying a degree of comparative comfort, was succeeded by feelings of horror, on hearing the relation of an insurrection which had taken place, on board the ship, previous to their sailing from the coast of

Africa. Many of the negroes being detained on board for a considerable time while the cargo was completing, and lying, during this period, within sight of their native shore, from which, and, perhaps, from their wives and families, they were about to be torn for ever, had grown indignant even to desperation, and rising upon the ship's company, murdered the master and mate, who then belonged to the vessel, and wounded several of the men: nor was it until after a very severe and bloody contest that they were overcome; when the ring-leaders were put to death, as an example to deter others from again revolting. One of the sailors shewed us three desperate wounds which he had received on the face, the breast, and the arm, from the stroke of an axe, with which one of the blacks had, just before, struck off the captain's head.

The next day, after our visit to the American slave-ship, an opportunity offered of seeing one of our own nation—a Liverpool Guinea-man—a ship of much greater burden, fitted out expressly for the trade, with a sufficient number of hands and of guns on board

to protect her against the enemy's privateers; and calculated for a cargo of five hundred slaves.

We were taught to believe that we should find the negroes much better accommodated in this, than in the American ship; but we could not observe that the superiority was either great, or striking. Although the vessel was larger, the number of slaves was more than proportionally greater. In other respects the accommodations were nearly equal. The Liverpool ship was kept remarkably clean; but the American was not less so; and, between the decks, the American ship was the most commodious, being higher, and having more room in proportion to the cargo, from which the slaves had the advantage of being less close and confined during the night.

In the sleeping place of the English vessel we could not stand up without stooping almost double:—in each the men and women were kept separate—in both their food was rice; and in both they slept naked upon the

naked planks, crowded together like sheep in a fold.

The most striking difference that occurred to our observation was, that the slaves of the Liverpool ship were of blacker and smoother skin than the others, and all of them free from that dirty eruption, the cra-cra; but upon our noticing this better appearance of one cargo than the other, the apparent superiority was instantly explained to us, by the observation that the Liverpool vessel had reached her destined port, and that her cargo had been made up, for market, by having their skins dressed over three or four times with a compound of gun-powder, lime-juice and oil—a preparation which not only destroys the cra-cra, and gives the skin, a smooth, black, and polished appearance, but likewise renders it sleek and fine: and it was further remarked that the cargo of the American ship would be made to look as well, before they reached the port where they were to be exposed for sale.

LETTER XXI.

Author and his comrades live on board ship at Barbadoes. Accommodation of a Barbadoes tavern. Method of cooling liquors. Porter better than in England. Tavern waiters. Black and mulatto hostesses. Privilege of female attendants. Bar-maid at Mary Bella Green's. Law concerning the children of slaves. Women of colour not dignified with the title of mistress. Conversation with two female slaves.

Carlisle Bay, Feb.

FROM the details I gave you of our tedious voyage, you will learn, with surprize, that we still continue to live on board ship. But to this we have many inducements. It is much cooler in the harbour, than it is in Bridge Town ; we are much less annoyed with musquitoes ; and, from our belonging to the St. Domingo staff, and being in daily expectation of receiving orders to proceed to that island, we are, at all moments, ready to move, and without the risk of leaving our baggage behind ; moreover, by living on board, while we are detained to windward, our sea-habits are continued, and perhaps we may thereby

avoid the tormenting sickness of a second voyage.

We have a regular mess established. Every morning we go or send to market for provisions ; and our domestic arrangements are better regulated, and in more of comfort than if we were on shore. Occasionally we dine, and spend the whole, or part of a day at Bridge Town, but we never fail to return on board to sleep.

We find that the accommodations of a West India tavern, although not precisely what a Bond-street loungeur would expect in St. James's-street, or a high-fed alderman in the city, are by no means despicable : and you know that I am enough a soldier, and a traveller, rather to court the varieties we meet, than to repine, and regard them as hardships, because they are not, in every feature, the same as we are accustomed to in England.

But you have desired to be told of these varieties as they occur, and I have an early opportunity of trying your patience.—Our

first dinner on shore was at a tavern in Bridge Town, kept by a mulatto woman, Mary Bella Green. Plenty prevailed. The crowded table smoked with fish, a piece of boiled beef, a pepper-pot, a turkey, some roasted veal, and a quarter of mutton, with several different kinds of puddings, and quite an assortment of vegetables, of eight or nine different species—European and tropical. Our liquors were—most excellent bottled porter, good Madeira, tolerable claret, and very fine Noyeau. In the desert we were sadly disappointed, for, instead of the fine tropical fruits we had expected, three or four of the very common and inferior species were set before us, unripe, and bad in quality: viz. goavas, bananas, and four-sops, with some tough, and bitter shaddocks—to any, and all of which, the commonest apples, or gooseberries of Europe had been preferable. But Barbadoes is not an island abounding in the finer fruits of the climate, hence we do not judge of the delicious productions of the West Indies by this ill-chosen sample.

Our party, for whom we had ordered dinner, consisted of nine persons, but upon

coming to table, we found covers for fifteen, and learned that, instead of giving us a private dinner, as we had directed, they had put us into a large public room, and served a kind of *table d'hôte*. Not being prepared for this arrangement, we remonstrated against it, and, with some difficulty, prevailed in having the extra-covers removed ; but we soon perceived that we had gained little by thus interrupting the customs of the house : for they, directly, spread another table in the same room, and, setting down the six strangers close by us, divided the dinner, they had dressed, between the two parties.

In making out their bill for payment, they do not detail the separate articles of the dinner, the number of bottles of wine, the different plates of fruit, &c. as in England, but put down the whole sum, under the three general items of *dinner*, *wine*, and *fruit* ; and, at any house you are accustomed to use, if you call, occasionally, in a morning to rest, or to take shelter from the sun, or rain, they give you a glass of lemonade, or of coco-nut water, with a "*very welcome*," and consider themselves rewarded, by the payment

you make when you take dinner at the house. Nor is the demand for this at all extravagant, except, in so far as regards the the bad fruit. We paid a dollar each for dinner ; the same for the wine ; and half a dollar for the desert.

They make the wine and porter very pleasantly cool, by putting the bottles in wet cloth bags, and placing them in the open windows, for some time before dinner ; taking care to sprinkle them, occasionally, with water, as they stand exposed to the breeze. A very rapid evaporation is thus produced, and, consequently, far more heat carried off, than by merely setting the bottles cold in water. The porter is so highly improved by the climate, and rendered so pleasant, by this method of cooling, as to be very superior to any that is drank in England.

The attendants of the table are very numerous, black and yellow, male and female—perhaps too numerous to serve you well : for they are badly regulated, and the duty of one

being the duty of all, it is not regarded as the particular duty of either, and, consequently, is apt to be left unheeded. Each, being idle and inactive, waits for another to step before him, when any thing is called for ; and, although you have a crowd of servants round you, it is difficult to obtain what you want.

The females are, usually, of erect figure, and stately carriage, but they move in all the languor of the climate. They appear without shoes and stockings, in a short white jacket, and a thin short petticoat. They wear a white turban on the head ; but the neck and shoulders are left bare. Silence is not esteemed a necessary qualification among them, for they often join, with great freedom, and a sad drawling accent, in the conversation of the table. This will appear to you but little consistent with the reserve and abject forbearance of slavery ; but it is the consequence of the public situation in which these women are placed, and the familiarity that is commonly used towards them by strangers—to any, or all of whom

they are the very obedient, obliging, and *most convenient* humble servants.

On first making inquiry, respecting the accommodations of the house, we were surprized to learn their extent, and the facility with which they are attainable. A bed may be had for half a dollar per night, or three dollars per week ; and, for an additional sum well understood, the choice of an attendant to draw the curtains.

The hostess of the tavern is, usually, a black, or mulatto woman, who has been the favored enamorata of some *backra* * man ; from whom she has obtained her freedom, and perhaps two or three slaves to assist her in carrying on the business of the house ; where she now indulges in indolence, and the good things of life, grows fat, and feels herself of importance in society. To those who, in compliance with the Highgate privilege, court her particular attention, in preference to the more youthful attendants around her, she is supposed not to be violently cruel.

* The negro term used for white,

It is to her advantage that the female attendants of her family should be as handsome as she can procure them. Being slaves, the only recompence of their services, is the food they eat, the hard bed they sleep on, and the few loose clothes which are hung upon them. One privilege, indeed, is allowed them, which, you will be shocked to know, is that of tenderly disposing of their persons; and this offers the only hope they have of procuring a sum of money, wherewith to purchase their freedom: and the resource among them is so common, that neither shame nor disgrace attaches to it; but, on the contrary, she who is most sought, becomes an object of envy, and is proud of the distinction shewn her.

One of our attendants at table, appeared, both from her conversation and behaviour, to be very superior to her degraded station. She had nothing of beauty, nor even prettiness of face, but she was of good figure, and of respectable and interesting demeanor, and, in point of intellect, far above her colleagues. Together with gentleness of manner, and an easy, pleasant address, she possesses a degree

of understanding and ability which claim respect. In principle, and in sentiment, she appeared virtuous; and, from the frankness of her replies, it was evident that she knew no sense of wrong in her conduct. We could not but lament that the imperious habits of the country did not allow of her being placed as a more respectable member of society.

This woman is the great support of the house—the bar-maid, and leading manager of the family. Her mistress had refused to take a hundred guineas for her; which, she assured us, had been offered by a gentleman who would have purchased her. She has a very lively interesting little daughter, a Mestee about four years old. Of this child she spoke with great tenderness, and appeared to bear it all the fond attachment of an affectionate parent. Yet, as the infant was born in slavery, should the mother, by any means, obtain her own freedom, she cannot claim her child; but must leave it, still the disposable property of her mistress, equally

liable to be sold as any other piece of furniture in the house : for, in Barbadoes, the offspring of a woman in slavery becomes the absolute property of the owner to whom the mother belongs, whether it be black, yellow, or white ; as the law knows no period when the child of a slave shall be born free, however removed from the African : nor can the mother, under any circumstances of subsequent liberation, claim her infant from its owner, even though it should be of fairer skin than the fairest European. Thus are the natural ties of our species torn asunder ; and the dearest attachments, and purest affections of the heart cruelly broken down ! Babes are separated from their parents, and mothers robbed of their children, by this unnatural appropriation of human substance !

The manners, and the circumstances attending the situation of this mulatto were strongly interesting. Her whole deportment bespoke a degree of delicacy and refinement, together with a superiority of mind and

understanding ! Her intelligence and quickness of perception assured us that she had talents capable of high improvement ; and it is probable, that had fortune so placed her in life, as to have offered her the acquirements of a chaste and cultivated education, this woman, notwithstanding the color of her skin, had made a faithful and virtuous wife ; been an ornament to her friends and society ; and a blessing to the man who should have made her the partner of his hours.

The taverns are commonly known by the names of the persons who keep them. The most frequented, at Bridge Town, are those of Nancy Clarke, and Mary Bella Green ; the former a black—the latter a mulatto woman. Mrs. Clarke, or Mrs. Green would scarcely be known ! A party is said to dine at Mary Bella Green's, or at Nancy Clarke's—or, more concisely, at *Mary Bella's* or at *Nancy's*.—The title Mrs—seems to be reserved, solely, for the ladies from Europe, and the white creoles, and to form a distinction between them and the women of color of all classes and descriptions—none of whom,

of whatever shade or degree, are dignified with this appellation.

In the evening, after taking our first dinner on shore, Dr. Cleghorn and myself made a walk to visit the hospitals and barracks at St. Anne's Hill ; and, on our way back to Bridge Town, we were accosted by two negro girls of respectable appearance, sitting upon the step of a gentleman's gateway, by the road side.

Being just arrived in a land of slavery, and feeling desirous to converse with the Africans, and their descendants, in order to ascertain whether any deficiency of intellect, or inferiority of natural capacity was observable among them, we gladly detained ourselves, for some minutes, in conversation with these decent-looking young slaves. They were the property of the gentleman, at whose gate they were sitting ; and were employed as house servants, or as they are here termed, "*house-wenches* *," in his family.

Trifling as it is, I give you the conver-

* *Domestics of the kitchen, not slaves of the field.*

fation as it passed, divesting it only of the broken accent, with which our language is spoken by the negroes. It will serve to shew you that the replies were not inapposite; and perhaps not inferior to what might have been expected, from the common order of people in Europe. One of the girls was about sixteen, the other eighteen years of age. They conversed with ease and affability, but were very respectful and unassuming; and their whole conduct might have done credit even to European servants, not of the lowest class.

On our asking to whom they belonged, they replied "We belong to Col. B's. lady." Is this Col. B's house? "Yes; but the Col. is not at home—he is gone to England." How does it happen that you are sitting here, instead of being in the house at work? "Our work, for to-day, is finished, and we came to the gate to see the strangers, as they pass by." What strangers? "The strangers, who are come with the army, from old England." Do you like to meet strangers? "Oh! yes, yes!" And to talk with them? "Yes, if

they talk with us." Are the people, here, kind to strangers? "Oh, yes! it is always our custom: every body should be more kind to strangers than to their own people." Why so?—should we not be kind to every body? "Yes! we should be kind to every body, but we should be more kind to strangers, because they come far from their own home, and their friends; and because we may some time travel ourselves, and want kindness from others." Have you ever been far from your home? "No! but, perhaps, we may some day." How far have you ever travelled from your master's house? "Never more than five miles." Did you ride or walk? They both smiled, and hung down their heads, looking to the ground. No reply could have been more expressive, nor better understood.—"Ride! a slave ride! you are strangers here indeed! No! we walked, bore our burden on our backs, and journied on our naked feet!" We bade them good night, and walked on, pleased with the rencontre.

LETTER XXII.

Meat sold alive in the market at Barbadoes. Custom of blowing the meat. Creoles caution Dr. Cleghorn and the author against walking. Visit to a sugar plantation. Specimen of the indolent labour of slaves. A washing party. Indecency of women upon the streets. Effect of the indecent habits of slaves upon the minds of white females. Negro custom of picking each other's heads. Savage fight between a black woman, and a mulatto woman.

Carlisle Bay, Feb.

THE office of caterer for the mess having fallen to the lot of your friend, I may tell you that I sometimes go to Bridge Town, to buy living meat for dinnre. You will, perhaps, be surpris'd to learn that animals are, here, brought alive into the market, to be killed after the different joints are sold; and, that it often happens, that the meat is slaughtered, consigned to the pot or spit, brought to table, and eaten, without growing cold!

The very filthy custom of blowing the meat, is here carried to greater excess than in England. As soon as the calf is dead, a

hole is cut through the skin, near to the hock, and a long sharp-pointed stick, being introduced, is forced up the whole length of the thigh, and the side, to tear or break down the cellular membrane. This being done, the stick is withdrawn, and one negro puts his mouth to the hole and blows in air, while another beats, with a cane, upon every part of the skin; which beating and blowing, are continued until the carcase sounds like a drum, and the whole surface is inflated like a full-blown bladder—the animal being distended to nearly twice its former size. The skin is then taken off, and the meat distributed to the purchasers for immediate use.

Leaving our comrades, Weir, and Master, on board, Cleghorn and myself frequently make excursions on shore, and stroll about the town and the fields, by way of exercise, and of gratifying the strong curiosity which we feel to see and know all that appertains to the change we have made. In these ramblings, we often surprize the West Indians, by, what they term, the dangerous extent of our walks; and they assure us that, a

few months hence, we shall be little inclined to use such *violent* exercise. A walk of five or six miles appears to them *tremendous* : but we suffer no inconvenience from it, and, perhaps, without being, yet, well able to judge, we fancy that much of the languor and inactivity of the Creoles and creolised, might be prevented, and stronger health enjoyed, were they to accustom themselves, more freely, to habits of exercise. Against our theory they urge experience, remarking that all Europeans, however fond of using much exercise, on their first arrival, gradually lapse into the same indolent indulgence as the natives.

In one of these excursions we, lately, made a first visit to a sugar estate, in the hope of seeing the works, and witnessing the mode of making the sugar ; but we were disappointed, by finding that none of the slaves were at work, and that the manager was from home, with the keys of the boiling house in his pocket. We had, however, some compensation in being allowed to walk into an excellent garden, adjoining the house, where we were gratified with the novelty

of seeing a number of the tropical fruits, and observing the garden hedge, which was formed of a bush bearing immense quantities of a species of cherry, of a very pleasant flavor.

From this walk we returned to Bridge Town, by way of Pilgrim, the residence of the governor—a pleasant home, situated upon an elevated spot, about a mile from the Town.* Near this place our attention was arrested by a party of slaves, or, according to the language of the island, a *gang of negroes*, who were employed in making a road to the governor's house. It was the first large body of slaves we had met with, toiling at their regular employment, immediately under the lash of the whip; and we could not but remark that the manner of executing the task afforded a striking example of the indolence of climate, and of slavery. Nothing of diligence, nor industry appeared among them; and, verily, but little of bodily labor was expended. They seemed almost too idle to raise the hammer, which they let fall by its own weight, repeating the blow several times, upon the same stone, until it was

broken to pieces. A mulatto overseer attended them, holding a whip at their backs ; but he had every appearance of being as much a stranger to industry, as the negroes ; who proceeded very indolently, without seeming to be at all apprehensive of the driver or his whip, except when he made it fall across them in stripes.

In proportion to the work done by English laborers, and the price, usually, paid for it, the labor of these slaves could not be calculated at so much as twopence per day ; for almost any two men in England would, with the greatest ease, do as much work in a given time, as was performed by a dozen of these indolent meager-looking beings.

In one of our late perambulations, we fell in with a party of negro women, washing linen, at the opening of a river near the sea ; and a more disgusting sight I do not recollect ever to have beheld. They were old women, of strong-marked, and very hideous African countenance ; and had no

regard to decency either of manner, or person. Their bodies were naked, save a bit of blue cloth folded round the loins, and brought between the legs, from behind, to fasten before. As they stooped down, to dip the linen in the river, many of them exposed the crowded and callous escars of repeated punishment; and when they moved themselves in rubbing the clothes, or beating them upon the large stones before them, their long flaccid breasts fell over their arms, or hung in loose masses of corrugated skin flapping upon their bodies, so as to create a most disgusting and abhorrent appearance.

It has also happened to us to witness another species of indelicacy among the negro women, which is extremely offensive to an European eye. Regardless of decency, and of the crowd they meet, they are sometimes seen drawing their naked, pendulous breasts as they walk along, and spilling their milk upon the public streets.

You will, perhaps, be more shocked

than surprized that such-like indecencies should occur among the slaves ; but you will join in my regret that they should happen before the eyes of European wives, and spinners ; and you will lament the sad effect which the frequent recurrence of such offensive scenes must, necessarily, have in destroying that modest delicacy of sentiment, which renders so truly lovely, while it so much exalts the female mind.

Of this baneful effect, I am sorry to have it in my power to mention to you a striking example, which lately occurred to my notice. Being in company with a large party of Europeans, and white creoles, male and female, husbands, wives, widows, maidens, and strangers, at the time when the party was assembled, during the short moment before dinner, a sweet little babe, only a few months old, was brought into the room, by its black nurse, to be exhibited to the company : when the woman, who, with the exception of one short petticoat, was in perfect nudity, was desired, before all present, to suckle the child ; and its mother and grand-

mother, two of the most respectable ladies we have met, since we left England, in order to please "little bab," amused themselves by flapping, pressing, shaking about, and playing with the long black breasts of the slave, with very indelicate familiarity, before the whole company ; and without seeming to be at all sensible, that it was, in any degree, indecent or improper !

In all corners of the streets we meet with the filthy sight of pairs of negroes, of both sexes, sitting and lying about, with their heads in each other's laps, picking out the swarms of vermin which occupy their wool. This, as we had been told on board the slave ships, seems to be a feast of delight to the blacks, whether in freedom, or in slavery.

One day in passing along the street, we chanced to see a fight between two women of colour, one a negro, the other a mulatto. The crowd, about them, was very great, and European curiosity induced us to wait the result ; but we have no desire to witness such

another contest. You can have no conception of the brutal and savage means which were used by these women to injure each other. Not only biting, pinching, flapping, and scratching were employed ; but with the more horrid vengeance of the American gouchers, and in the most cold and deliberate manner, did each of these females thrust her thumb or fingers into the nose, mouth, and eyes, of the other, striving, in all the bitterness and cruelty of savage nature, to tear to pieces, to blind, or to maim her opponent.

I feel that this letter will be more painful than amusing to you ; and almost fear that you will charge me with having looked out for unpleasant and distressful events ! But I may assure you that, without going in search of them, they have accidentally fallen in my path ; and, as they are strong features, I cannot reconcile to myself to withhold them from you, merely because they are not of so pleasant a nature as I could have wished. It is my object, faithfully, to lay before you the facts I meet with, whether happy or unhappy, in order that you may be enabled

to form a just opinion of the character and habits of those among whom I may chance to be placed, while absent from England.

LETTER XXIII.

Sunday a day of festivity among the slaves. African dance, and music. Remarks of a Scottish woman on seeing the negroes dance. Fracas between a negro man and woman. Negro funeral. Faith of slaves in transmigration after death. Singular expedient to deter them from suicide.

Barbadoes, Feb.

IT is Sunday, and, separated by the wide Atlantic, I take up my pen to hallow the sabbath to my friend. Mentally I am every day in your society: but on the sabbath I breathe a still warmer aspiration to dear England, and sanctify the wish that we were, personally, nearer. Were you here to participate them with me, the novel scenes which occur to my observation would have a double interest, and I should find a charm in many things which now convey only a languid impression.

Sunday is a day of festivity among the slaves. They are passionately fond of dancing; and the sabbath, offering them an interval from toil, is, generally, devoted to their fa-

vorite amusement ; and, instead of remaining in tranquil rest, they undergo more fatigue, or at least more personal exertion, during their gala hours of Saturday night and Sunday, than is demanded from them, in labor, during any four days of the week.

They assemble, in crowds, upon the open green, or in any square or corner of the town, and, forming a ring in the centre of the throng, dance to the sound of their beloved music, and the singing of their favorite African yell. Both music and dance are of a savage nature. I have wished myself a musician, that I might take down for you the notes of their songs ; which are very simple, but harsh and wholly deficient in softness and melody. Ask the fair chantress our delighting friend - - - - the next time you meet her, and if she be not afraid of distorting her sweet countenance, she can give you, very accurately, all you may wish to hear of an African song.

The instrumental parts of the band consist of a species of drum, a kind of rattle, and

their ever-delighting Banjar. The first is a long hollow piece of wood, with a dried sheep-skin tied over the end ; the second is a calabash containing a number of small stones, fixed to a short stick which serves as the handle ; and the third is a coarse and rough kind of guitar. While one negro strikes the Banjar, another shakes the rattle with great force of arm, and a third sitting across the body of the drum, as it lies lengthwise upon the ground, beats and kicks the sheep skin at the end, in violent exertion with his hands and heels, and a fourth sitting upon the ground at the other end, behind the man upon the drum, beats upon the wooden sides of it with two sticks. Together with these noisy sounds, numbers of the party of both sexes bawl forth their dear delighting song with all possible force of lungs ; and from the combination, and *tout ensemble* of the scene, a spectator would require only a slight aid from fancy to transport him to the savage wilds of Africa. On great occasions the band is increased by an additional number of drums, rattles, and voices.

The dance consists of stamping of the

feet, twistings of the body, and a number of strange indecent attitudes. It is a severe bodily exertion—more bodily indeed than you can well imagine, for the limbs have little to do in it. The head is held erect, or, occasionally, inclined a little forward—the hands nearly meet before—the elbows are fixed, pointing from the sides—and the lower extremities being held rigid, the whole person is moved without lifting the feet from the ground. Making the head and limbs fixed points, they writhe and turn the body upon its own axis, slowly advancing towards each other, or retreating to the outer parts of the ring. Their approaches, with the figure of the dance, and the attitudes and inflexions in which they are made, are highly indecent: but of this they seem to be wholly unconscious, for the gravity—I might say the solemnity of countenance; under which all this passes, is peculiarly striking, indeed almost ridiculous. Not a smile—not a significant glance, nor an immodest look escapes from either sex: but they meet, in very indecent attitudes, under the most settled, and unmeaning gravity of countenance. Occasionally they change the

figure by stamping upon the feet, or making a more general movement of the person, but these are only temporary variations; the twistings and turnings of the body seeming to constitute the supreme excellence of the dance.

For the most part only two enter the ring at a time, but, occasionally, as many as three or four! each making a small contribution to the band at the time of stepping into the circle. They circle, violently, together until one is tired, and when this escapes from the circle another assumes the place, thus continuing to follow, one by one, in succession, so as frequently to keep up the dance, without any interval, for several hours.

Both musicians and dancers seem, equally, to delight in the amusement. They exert themselves until their naked skins pour off copious streams. The band seem to be quite insensible to fatigue; for, in proportion as the fluid distils from their pores, they increase their efforts, raising their voices, and beating the drum and the rattle, with ad-

ditional violence : and such of the spectators whose olfactories have no relish for African odours, are sadly annoyed by the high effenced exhalation which spreads itself around.

As I was looking on at one of these dances I observed a soldier's wife, from the north of Tweed, gazing with curiosity and astonishment, amidst the throng : and seeing her features marked with dissatisfaction and surprise, I asked her what she thought of the African dance. "*Oot,*" said she "*'tis an unce way o' spending the sabbath night.*"—And on my asking her if there were any as pretty woman in the Highlands of Scotland, she, instantly, replied "*whether or not—they smell better.*"

Presently a soldier passing that way, and observing the dance, asked a mulatto who was standing by, for a cud of tobacco, and twisting it between his lower lip and his teeth, forced his way through the crowd, into the middle of the ring ; and there placing himself, between the negro and the girl

who were dancing, set the nymph in African step and figure. Wowfki was responsive and they danced, cordially, together; but soon finished by footing it, in quick step, from the ring, happily enfolded in each others' arms; to the great disappointment of poor Sambo, who, no doubt, thought to regain his partner as soon as the soldier had grown tired in the dance.

Near this merry green happened a sad fracas between a negro man and woman, in consequence of gaming; which is a very prevailing passion among the blacks. The woman had won from the man three dollars, and some words having arisen between them, a scuffle ensued, in which the man had torn off the few clothes, that covered the ebon dame, and exposed her, in nakedness, to the crowd. She, in return, tore and mal-treated his breeches; and the dispute now was whether the woman, having been the successful adventurer, ought not to make reparation for the further injury she had committed. The man exclaimed, with sad violence, regarding the additional loss, sustained by the

destruction of his indispensable apparel. The woman, putting all success at play out of the question, insisted that she was the injured party, from having her petticoat ruined, and being exposed, in nudity, to the multitude.

At length a respectable looking, and decently dressed negro, who chanced to pass that way, kindly undertook to settle this important broil; and we observed that much deference was paid to his opinion; but I am not satisfied that he acted quite the part of an upright and impartial judge,—certainly his opinion was not fraught with gallantry, for having no eye of pity towards the distressed, and naked nymph, he decided that a hole in the *culottes* was an evil of greater magnitude than a rent in the *petticoat*, and accordingly decreed that Penelope should forfeit half a dollar to Cassandro, for taking him by the breeches.

Having led you to the merry song, and sprightly dance of the slaves, let me now conduct you to their bed of death. Seeing a crowd in one of the streets, and observing a

kind of procession, we followed the multitude, and soon found ourselves in the train of a negro funeral. Wishing to witness the ceremony of interment we proceeded to the burial ground, with the throng. The corpse was conveyed in a neat small hearse, drawn by one horse. Six boys, twelve men, and forty-eight women walked behind, in pairs, as followers, but I cannot say as deeply afflicted mourners. The females were neatly clad, for the occasion, and mostly in white. Grief and lamentations were not among them: nor was even the semblance thereof assumed. No solemn dirge was heard—no deep-sounding bell was tolled—no fearful silence held. It seemed a period of mirth and joy. Instead of weeping and bewailing, the followers jumped and sported, as they passed along, and talked and laughed, with each other, in high festivity. The procession was closed by five robust negro fishermen, who followed behind playing antic gambols, and dancing all the way to the grave.

At the gate of the burying ground the corpse was taken from the hearse, and borne

by eight negroes, not upon their shoulders, but upon four clean white napkins placed under the coffin. The body was committed to the grave, immediately, on reaching it, without either prayer or ceremony; and the coffin, directly, covered with earth. In doing this, much decent attention was observed. The mould was not shovelled in roughly with the spade, almost disturbing the dead, with the rattling of stones and bones upon the coffin, but was first put into a basket, and then carefully emptied into the grave; an observance which might be adopted in England very much to the comfort of the afflicted friends of the deceased.

During this process an old negro woman chanted an African air, and the multitude joined her in the chorus. It was not in the strain of a hymn, or solemn requiem, but was loud and lively, in unison with the other gaieties of the occasion.

Many were laughing and sporting the whole time with the fishermen, who danced and gambolled, during the ceremony, upon

the neighbouring graves. From the moment the coffin was committed to the earth, nothing of order was maintained by the party. The attendants dispersed in various directions, retiring, or remaining, during the filling up of the grave, as inclination seemed to lead.

When the whole of the earth was replaced several of the women, who had staid to chant, in merry song, over poor Jenny's clay, took up a handful of the mould, and threw it down again upon the grave of their departed friend, as the finishing of the ceremony, crying aloud "*God bless you, Jenny! good-by! remember me to all friends i' other side of the sea, Jenny! Tell 'em me come soon! Good-by, Jenny, good-by! See for send me good - - - to-night, Jenny! Good-by, good night, Jenny, good-by!*" All this was uttered in mirth and laughter, and accompanied with attitudes and gesticulations expressive of any thing but sorrow or sadness.

From the grave-digger we learned that poor Jenny had been a washerwoman, and

that the females who had, so merrily, sounded her requiem, had been her sud-affociates. They had full faith in Jenny's transmigration to meet her friends, at her place of nativity; and their persuasion that death was only a removal from their present to their former home—a mere change from a state of slavery to a state of freedom—did not barely alleviate, but wholly prevented the natural grief and affliction arising from the loss of a friend. They confidently expected to hear from poor Jenny, or to know her influence, in the way they most desired, before morning.

The faith of these poor ignorant slaves, regarding a happy transmigration, after death, would seem calculated to lead them to the crime of suicide; and, accordingly, this effect of their superstition is said not to have been unfrequent among them. A tale is told of a singular remedy having been practised against this fatal expedient of the negroes. Several individuals of a gang having hanged themselves to escape from a cruel master, and others being about to avoid his severities by similar means, he

prevented them, by the happy expedient of threatening to hang himself, also, and to transmigrate, with them, carrying the whip in his hand, into their own country ; where he would punish them ten times more severely than he had hitherto done. The stratagem is said to have succeeded. Finding they could not, thus, escape from the tyrannic lash, they resolved, rather than receive disgraceful stripes among their African friends, to continue their existence under all the hardships of slavery.

LETTER XXIV.

Author and his comrades receive kind attentions from Mr. B. Hinde. Make a visit to Dr. Hinde. General face of the country above Bridge-Town. The party at Dr. Hinde's witness the process of making rum and sugar. Slaves employed as running footmen. Four women seen toiling in a cane-field with a man holding a whip at their backs. Dr. Cleghorn and the Author continue their walking exercise. Meet with trees of the poisonous manchineel—also of the sea-grape. A coco-nut grove. Hospitality of a planter. A happy negro-yard. Mode of washing linen at Barbadoes.

Barbadoes, Feb.

HAVING fatigued you, in my late letters, with tedious notes, concerning the slaves and their customs, I feel happy to have it in my power to introduce you to the society of their masters. Through the friendly medium of Mr. Benjamin Hinde, a merchant of great respectability in Bridge-Town, we have been made known to several gentlemen who reside in the country, and are of importance in the island: and who, in liberal and friendly hospitality, offer us the means of seeing the whole of Barbadoes, and of

witnessing the customs and manners of its inhabitants. It were unnecessary to remark that this will be a great source of gratification to me, and will, even, lead me to rejoice in the event, while I lament the cause of our delay.

We have made a ride about four miles into the country, to dine with one of our professional brethren, Dr. Hinde, a man of high acquirements, and sound knowledge. He was educated in England, and remained many years, in the prosecution of his studies, at Cambridge. Until lately he employed himself in the practice of medicine, at Bridge-Town ; but he has, now, in great part, retired from the fatigues of medical occupation, to engage in the more genial, and more lucrative employment of a planter. To the inhabitants of the town this is a severe loss; and they, justly, lament the absence of a man not less endeared to them by his private worth, and urbanity, than by his eminent professional talents.

We very much enjoyed the ride to the doctor's estate ; which is situated upon much

higher ground than the immediate environs of Bridge-Town ; the country rising towards the interior of the island, in elevated ranges of distinct table-land. At one spot we ascended by a very steep road, and, having reached the summit of the declivity, there found ourselves again upon an extensive plain. Soon afterwards we came to another rocky precipice, and having mounted this, by a path of difficult ascent, we arrived upon another, and still higher range of table-land. From the points of these sudden elevations we commanded very extensive and delightful views of the country below, of Bridge-Town, of the sea, and of the shipping in Carlisle Bay.

The land is cultivated in open field—hedges, walls, and all the usual fences seem to be unknown ; nor does the eye discover any distinct separation of the different estates ; but it ranges, uninterrupted, over a wide-extended surface, richly spread with the various productions of a tropical soil, and pleasantly interspersed with the mansions of the whites, and the huts of the negroes. Cotton, pigeon peas, and Guinea corn, constitute

the great produce of this part of the island. Some fields of aloes, and of plantains, were also seen: but there appeared a degree of nakedness from the want of wood, of which there is not a sufficiency to give a general richness to the landscape, although about the great *Backra*-houses there are several fine groves of the coco-nut and the majestic mountain-cabbage trees.

We arrived about two o'clock, having made our ride in the strongest heat of the day; but from the purity and freshness of the air, and from the country being more elevated, as we advanced, we felt no degree of languor or oppression, from a full exposure to the sun. At the doctor's house, in consequence of the situation and construction of the building, we felt it cooler than either in Bridge-Town, or Carlisle Bay. The party at dinner consisted of eight ladies, and fourteen gentlemen; the attendants were also numerous, yet, notwithstanding the number of persons in the room, and the many smoking dishes on the table, the steady perfusion of the breeze kept us sufficiently cool.

The day passed most pleasantly :—all was harmony and good cheer. The hospitality which spread the feast, enriched its flavor, and the entertainment was highly graced by the urbanity and attentive politeness of the doctor and his lady. On our way back to Bridge-Town, in the evening, we perceived the air to be more close and oppressive, and the heat greater as we descended from each plain of table-land ; so that the difference we felt between breathing in the town, and in the cool breeze of the country was very striking, and led us to felicitate the doctor in having so advantageously exchanged physic for sugar—the confined streets of the town for the open hills of the country.

It was the season of cutting the canes, and Dr. Hinde, kindly attentive to our gratification, had contrived that the works should be going, in order that we might witness the method by which the saccharine juice is separated from the canes, and afterwards prepared into sugar. We also visited the distilling house, and inspected the apparatus for making the rum ; hence, we had

this day, an opportunity of witnessing the progressive steps from the cutting of the canes, to the converting of their juice into sugar and rum. At some more leisure moment, perhaps, I may note for you the whole of the process.

We made our excursion in single-horse chaises, like those, with leather tops, used in England; from which they only differ by having the leather, at the sides and the back, made to roll up, and let down at pleasure, for the twofold purpose of admitting the air, and excluding the rain. We were attended by slaves as running footmen, whose duty it was to travel as fast as we did, and to be in readiness to hold the bridles, or stand at the horses' heads, at any spot where we might chance to alight, or to pause. They were equal in number to our horses, but as we were unaccustomed both to running footmen, and to slaves, we had strong feelings of compunction respecting these pedestrian pages; and from seeing them run, and pant, and broil, exposed to the mid-day heat of a tropical sun, merely for our ease and pleasure, it be-

came so painfully annoying to us that we lost all sense of comfort and enjoyment: Dr. Cleghorn and myself, therefore, stopped to desire that they would get up, alternately, and ride behind our chaise. Two of them, only, accepted the offer—all the others continued to walk or run throughout the journey.

Upon our mentioning to the gentlemen of the island our uneasy feelings respecting these sable attendants, they smiled at our European tenderness, and assured us that so far from it being a fatigue or hardship to them, they always hailed such an excursion as a holiday, and preferred it to remaining quietly at home. We could not, for an instant, dispute the information; but from knowing that such violent exercise, under such excessive heat, must have been fatal to ourselves, and not being enough West Indians to know how very differently it affected the negroes, we could not regard them without suffering strong feelings of *mal-aise*.

At one spot, in the course of our ride, we had our attention arrested by observing

a party of four, almost naked, females working in a cane-field. Curiosity would not allow us to pass on without devoting to them a moment of particular regard. We, therefore, went a little off the road to approach them nearer; when we found that they were labouring with the hoe, to dig, or cut up the ground, preparatory to the planting of sugar; and that a stout robust-looking man, apparently white, was following them, holding a whip at their backs. Observing that he was the only one of the party who was idle, we inquired why he did not partake of the task, and were told, in reply, that it was not his business—that he had only to keep the women at work, and to make them feel the weight of the whip if they grew idle, or relaxed from their labour.

Impulsive nature flushed at this information, and we felt shocked and indignant, at seeing a man, apparently, strong enough to do as much work as the whole of the four, employed in the sole occupation of brandishing the whip over these poor degraded females,

Reverting to the protection demanded from us, by the tender sex, we forgot for a moment, all the circumstances of the country we were in, and, indulging in a train of European sentiments, could not refrain from rebuking the man: and although reflection whispered "*he is but on duty,*" I confess that I must remain long in a land of slavery, before I can witness such a scene, without feeling a strong impulse to take the whip from the fellow's hand, and lay the lash across his shoulders, until he shall relieve the women, by, at least, partaking of their toil.

Notwithstanding the alarm of our Barbadoes acquaintance, Dr. Cleghorn and myself continue our walks, by rambling about the fields, and the paths, in the environs of Bridgetown, at an early hour of the morning: and, perhaps, we do not feel more fatigue than we might experience from the same degree of exercise in Europe. We, lately, walked from 6 to 9 o'clock, and if you had the opportunity of consulting our stately mulatto attendant, at

Mary Bella Green's, you would learn that we exhibited no marks of a decreased appetite at breakfast-time.

Near the sea we were protected from the great force of the sun by the shade of trees whose leaves and trunk very much resembled the common pear tree of England, but whose fruit was, in form, a correct likeness of the apple. We knew not that it was forbidden, but had enough of caution not to taste it. However I gathered a small branch, bearing fruit and leaves, and put into my pocket as a specimen, from which we might ascertain what tree it was. Presently afterwards we met a negro, and upon our shewing it to him, and asking its name, he, instantly, exclaimed with all the impulse of alarm, "*Ab, Massa, dat poison—dat no good for nbyaam—dat daamm manchineel, Massa.*" Finding that I had fostered a serpent, I directly threw away every leaf, and every apple; but I discovered that, like other insidious foes, manchineel had quickly diffused its poison, and I afterwards smarted for my curiosity. Either my handkerchief,

or my gloves had imbibed the offensive particles and from having incautiously used them, my lips and face burnt for many hours after, with all the scorplings of cantharidistical acrimony; also from their having reached the tongue and fauces I was brought into a copious salivation, and, throughout the morning, my mouth and throat were much swelled, and throbbed with fiery heat.

Near the sea we saw likewise some other trees, bearing a fruit very like grapes,—but experience of the manchineel made us cautious in gathering further specimens of tropical production. Some negroes whom we met informed us that they were called sea-grapes, and were used as fruit: upon which we ventured to gather a few of them, and found that they were of pleasant flavor. In the course of the same walk we met with a fine avenue of coco-nut trees, bordered with the aloe and the plantain. This was not to be resisted. We could not forego the pleasure of exploring the extent of this delightful shade, and, therefore, proceeded to its utmost depth, when we found that it led to

a gentleman's house ; from which, as we approached, the lord of the mansion came out to bid us welcome, and to tender us the civilities of hospitality. We accepted the very grateful refreshment of a fine shaddock, pulled fresh from the tree, and the gentleman, kindly, conducted us to the plantain ground, the negro yard, and different parts of the house and estate.

We had, before, seen many negro huts, some shaded by the sea-grape, some sheltered by the broad and balmy leaf of the plantain, some protected by the umbrageous coco-nut, and some standing amidst the open fields, exposed to the full ardor of the sun ; but all these were of a mean order, straggling, and dispersed, and bearing no kind of resemblance to the collective abode, constructed for the slaves of this estate.

It is common at the plantations to allot a small piece of ground, at a short distance from the house, to the use of the negroes, and this is called the negro-yard. Here the slaves

are allowed to build themselves small huts to live in, but they are, commonly, of very coarse construction, and are dark, close, and smoky. At the estate I now speak of, a circular piece of ground had been appropriated as the negro-yard, but instead of the slaves being left to construct their own habitations, sixteen very neat and uniform cabins have been erected of wood, and well roofed with shingles*. Placed in eight divisions they form a hollow octagon, a free opening being left for the breeze at one end of each hut. In the centre of the octagon is built a common kitchen, which serves for all the sixteen families. The huts are neat, and the whole premises wear an air of order, and of cleanliness, not common to the abode of slaves.

We contemplated this spot with much satisfaction, and were gratified in observing the high degree of attention, which was here given to the comfort and accommodation of the negroes ; who had little cause to lament

* Wooden tiles.

their removal from the wild woods of an opposite shore; and could as little desire to change their present lot for the high-rated freedom of European paupers.

This happy negro-yard forms, as it were, a little village of sixteen families, all of whom may assemble, each evening, after the labour of the day, to join in the merry dance, or to smoke and sing together, free from every care. No thought have they how to provide for their infants, or their aged parents—nor have they to seek either food, habitation, or apparel. To each family is allotted a separate, and to all a common home; the necessary food and clothing are issued to them; and they know none of the anxious cares or difficulties of the world. No fearful concern, nor harassing incumbrance can arise to them on account of their offspring, who, like themselves, are furnished with all that is needful; and those who have most children find themselves most valued and esteemed. In sickness, medical attendance is provided for them, and whatever is necessary is administered, without thought or anxiety, on their own behalf.

Thus are they guarded, at every avenue, against the approach of want and care. Six days labour is demanded from them in the week ; but the sabbath is given them as a day of rest and relaxation ; and, from the total absence of care, it is usually spent in unbounded mirth and festivity.

In the course of our walks we have met with another washing party, and as you desire to know all that occurs, whether of much or little importance, I may tell you that, in this operation of cleaning, our linen is here beaten and rubbed, and scrubbed to pieces in a most unmerciful manner, and, after all, without being made, even, tolerably clean.

The following is the process employed ; the linen is first put into a tub, and rubbed through some water, then it is taken out and sprinkled with sand, previous to being pressed and beaten with a piece of wood, upon a coarse large stone, by the side of the river ; after which it is rubbed out in the open stream. Next it is sprinkled with the fine white sand of the shore, and spread out by the sea to

whiten; then it receives another dipping in water, and, finally, is rinsed out in the running stream of the river. From the rough treatment it undergoes, it seldom comes home without being torn into various rents and holes. The demand made for this rude cleaning is *a bit* for each piece, without any regard to its size, or the labour required. A dozen shirts are washed for *twelve bits*, or, according to our coin, for twelve sixpences, and for the washing of a dozen pocket-handkerchiefs we pay the same.

LETTER XXV.

Author and his comrades make an excursion to Col. Williams's. Custom of riding with a sugar cane. Soil of Barbadoes. Picturesque scenery of the district called Scotland. "Sweet shades" of Turner's-hall wood. Boiling or inflammable spring. Barbadoes-Tar. Lemons left to fall under the trees, like crabs. Mountain cabbage-tree. View from Mount Hilloughby. A "runaway estate." A golden orchard. A "social rock." Crayfish soup, and Centurian Oranges. Evening ride to Bridgetown. Running slaves the only alloy to a most delightful excursion. Belfast transport captured by the enemy. Trees, plants, and fruits, of Barbadoes. Remarks concerning the cultivation and flavor of pines.

Barbadoes, Feb.

WE have made another very delightful excursion, and find this little island more interesting and picturesque than my pen can tell you. Being invited to form a party to the plantation of Col. Williams, and to go very early, in order that we might extend our ride to some of the most beautiful spots of the island, before dinner, Cleghorn, Master, and

myself rose very early, and left the ship at 5 o'clock. On arriving at Bridge Town we found slaves, horses and every necessary, for the excursion, provided by the friendly attention of Mr. B. Hinde, under whose guidance we placed ourselves for the journey.

We went to the house of his brother before breakfast, where we found the table spread, and the doctor waiting to receive us, and prepared to join the party ; as was also Mr. Abel Hinde, another of his brothers. After amply satisfying our morning appetites, we proceeded towards Col. Williams's, which is some miles further in the country. The sun had become more powerful than we had felt it on our way from Bridge-Town to the doctor's; but we gradually ascended to higher land, and coming into a mountainous part of the country, we found the breeze sufficiently strong to prevent all sense of languor or oppression.

A little before we reached the abode of Col. Williams, we passed through a field where a large gang of negroes was employed

in cutting canes. This proved a seasonable refreshment to us, for we had grown thirsty, and were glad to adopt the Barbadoes custom of giving our whips to the slaves, and taking sugar canes to ride with—sucking one end to quench our thirst, while we beat on our horses with the other.

Thus equipped, we presently arrived at the dwelling of the owner of the canes, saluting him with the staffs of sugar in our hands, which we had just taken from his field. He greeted us very cordially, invited us to alight, and, perceiving that some of us were strangers, conducted us to the works, to shew us the process of making the sugar. While looking at the sugar-works, we were joined by Col. Williams, who had rode out thus far, to meet us; and our party being now complete, we proceeded to a most romantic and beautiful part of the island, called Scotland.

Near Bridge-Town we observed that the soil was of rich black earth, but not of great depth, being in many places only thinly spread upon calcareous rocks, which are formed

mostly of madripores. Further in the country the earth is of a reddish cast, and evidently argillaceous. This is broken, by cultivation, into fine mould; and the soil is deeper, though less rich, than that near to the Town.

In some divisions of the part of the country called Scotland the land is white; and pieces of earth have, here, been found so hardened as to bear the knife or chissel, and it has been possible to mark, or write with them, as with chalk; and hence one spot has been denominated chalk-estate: but the name is founded in error, for the soil is not calcareous: it is argillaceous, and being hardened by the evaporation of its aqueous parts, the earth is rendered white by exposure to the weather. The district of Scotland comprehends the whole of the parish of St. Andrew, and part of two other parishes—the tutelar saint contributing in larger proportion than both the others.

This part of the island is uncommonly picturesque, and comprehends a very grand and interesting variety of scenery. With the

rude stupendous irregularity, and the dark shades of the Alps, and the romantic wildness of the mountains of Wales or Scotland, it combines the gentle but lively variety of the soft and flowing surface of England: and, together with these, it offers wide views of the encircling ocean, the shipping at sea and in the harbour, and all the rich luxuriance of tropical vegetation.

The particular spot from whence this part of the island would seem to have derived its name, is raised in rugged cliffs, and broken uncultivated summits, forming a rude contrast to the high fertility of the vallies, and the bottoms of the hills. Neighbouring mountains, yet more lofty than these barren cliffs, tower around, clothed with rich verdure; and the great variety of the scene is further increased by the umbrageous foliage and diversified tints of Turner's-hall wood, —the most extensive, and the oldest forest in the island.

After being long exposed to the scorching sun, in contemplating the many beauties

of this sweet neighbourhood, we passed over rough and rugged roads, along crooked narrow paths, up steep mountains, and down rapid descents, into the deep gloom of the forest; where the change of scene was no less striking, than the coolness of the temperature was refreshing and grateful. Literally might these be called *sweet shades*, for they not only offered the protection we courted, but likewise contributed the refreshment of oranges and lemons to quench our thirst, and further regaled us with the fragrance of odoriferous shrubs and plants.

Nor was this all, for the cool retreats of the forest ministered still more bountifully to the pleasures of this charming excursion; which was equally calculated to amuse the traveller, and to gratify the naturalist, and the philosopher. Fastidious, indeed, must he have been,—nor would you, my friend, have envied him the apathy of his feelings, who could not be amused, nor find subjects for his contemplation in such a tour. No such travellers were of our party—all were amused—all delighted and gratified. We, who were

strangers dwelt on every scene with rapture; and our kind friends, to whom the whole was familiar, expressed new delight in administering, so amply, to our gratification.

The cool shelter of the forest was derived from the mountain-cabbage, from large cedars, and from others of the oldest and finest trees of the island. Amidst these shades we descended to a narrow gully, between two mountains, to see one of the great curiosities—one of the reported phænomena of Barbadoes—"a boiling spring!" On approaching the spot, we came to a small hut in which was living an old black woman, who employed herself as a guide to exhibit, under a kind of necromantic process, all the details of this boiling and burning fountain. The old dame, bearing in her hand a lighted taper, and taking with her an empty calabash, and all the other necessary apparatus of her office, led the way from the hut down to the spring. In a still, and most secluded situation, we came to a hole, or small pit filled with water, which was bubbling up in boiling motion, and pouring, from its receptacle, down a narrow chan-

nel of the gully. Here our fable forceress, in all the silence and solemnity of magic, placing the light at her side, fell down upon her knees, and, with her calabash, emptied all the water out of the hole, then, immersing the taper in the deep void, she suddenly set the whole pit in a flame; when she instantly jumped upon her legs, and looked significantly round, as if anxious to catch the surprise expressed upon our countenances, from the workings of her witchcraft. The taper being removed, the empty space continued to burn with a soft lambent flame, without the appearance of any thing to support the combustion. We observed fresh water slowly distilling into the pit, from the earth at its sides, and dropping to the bottom; and as this increased in quantity, it raised the flame higher and higher in the pit, supporting it upon its surface, and conveying the appearance of the water itself being on fire; although it was very clear and pure, and not spread with any oily or bituminous matter. When the water had risen to a certain height, the flame became feeble, then gradually declined, and presently was extinct. The

water was now seen to boil and bubble as before, and, soon overflowing the pit, resumed its course down the narrow channel of the gully, and all was restored to the state in which we had found it.

You will, before this, have discovered that the water was cold, and that the boiling and burning of this fiery deep was only the effect of inflammable gas, which, escaping from the bowels of the earth, and rising from the bottom of the pit, supported the flame when it was empty, and, bubbling through it, when it was filled with water, gave it the appearance of a boiling spring. During the combustion, the smell of the inflammable air was very powerful.

In the stones and soil, in the very rocks and roads, we traced the origin of this phenomenon of nature. Asphaltic productions abounded on every quarter: and, upon inquiry, we found that we were in the very part of the country which produces the celebrated Barbadoes tar; the smell of which saluted us as we rode along; and we even saw it distil-

ling from the hills of hardened clay, and likewise issuing from the rocks at the sides of the road. The argillaceous soil of this neighbourhood is every where strongly impregnated with bitumen, in which you will readily perceive the origin of the "boiling, or inflammable spring."

We were next conducted to several spots, amidst the rough and wooded mountains, where we saw the tar issuing copiously into pits from the earth, and witnessed the mode of collecting it. So plentiful is it in this part of the country, that it may be procured from any hole dug deep enough to contain water; for when small openings are made in the earth, and water has flowed into them, the petroleum exuding from around accumulates and floats in a thick coat upon the surface. The mode of collecting it is by laying the palm of the hand flat upon the water, and then scraping off the tar, which adheres to it, upon the edge of a basin or a calabash, repeating the dipping and scraping until the surface of the water is entirely cleared of its bituminous coating. After a

few days the water is again covered, and more of the tar may be collected in a similar manner.

'To reach these pits of tar we were obliged to scramble, on foot, through deep and mountainous woods, and by way of narrow rugged paths; leaving our slaves and horses to go round and meet us at a distant spot below. Near the pits were growing great numbers of lemon trees, whose fruit, like the crabs of the English hedges, having fallen from its branches, lay in heaps, unhceded, under the trees.

In the part of the wood where we saw the inflammable spring were great numbers of mountain cabbage trees, which were said to be of a peculiar kind, and different from all others in the island. This magnificent palm is unquestionably the finest tree that grows. From words, or drawings, you can only collect an imperfect idea of it. To comprehend its fine symmetry, its grandeur, and majestic loftiness, it must be seen. Its trunk is very smooth, and almost regularly

cylindrical, rising into a superb and stately pillar, resembling a well-hewn column of stone. At the base its circumference is somewhat greater than at any other part, yet lessening so gradually, upwards, as to preserve the most just and accurate proportion. Not a single branch, nor even the slightest twig, interrupts the general harmony of the trunk, which often rises, in a correct perpendicular, to the height of from sixty to a hundred feet, and then spreads its palmated foliage into a wide and beautifully radiated circle. Branches it has none, but the fine expansive leaves, shooting immediately from the summit of the stately trunk, extend around it, crowning, and, as it were, protecting the massy column, in form of a full expanded umbrella.

It will perhaps occur to you that our noble English oak, with all its rude and crooked limbs, must be a more picturesque object. So it is, and so is likewise the wide-spreading silk-cotton : but the loftiness, the stately grandeur, the exact proportion, and the deep-shading foliage of the mountain-cabbage are unequalled, and, in their happy

The whole island, encircled by the Atlantic ocean, was under the eye, displaying a scene which comprehended all the variety of land and sea, of hill and vale, of rude nature and high cultivation. On one hand were barren rugged rocks—on the other rich and fertile plains. Towns, houses, huts, and sugar-works were seen distributed about the island; bays and rivulets were before us opening into the sea; a large fleet appeared at anchor, with its forest of masts intermixed amidst the buildings of the town; multitudes of ships and boats were sailing in all directions round the coast; and the solemn forests and painted groves displayed all the rich foliage of tropical vegetation. To form such a picture would defeat the genius of a Claude, or defy the bold pencil of a Salvator Rosa. It was also further enhanced, by the circumstances under which we saw it; the bright tropical sun being, suddenly, overcast by a heavy black cloud; which, stealing along the mountain tops, so varied the shades and tints as to give additional effect to all the beauties of the scene: but while we were devoutly contemplating it, this cloud broke upon us in

all the violence of a pelting storm, and drove us to seek shelter in a neighbouring cottage.

Amidst the variety comprised in the view from Hilloughby hill I must not forget to mention that we saw what is here termed the "*runaway* estate"—which is a territory of many acres of fine and rich soil, so called from having been removed, at various times, to a considerable distance, by heavy torrents of rain, or sudden ruptures of the earth. It is said not to be an unfrequent occurrence, in this island, for a large tract of land thus to assume a change of place; many examples of which are to be seen in the parishes of St. Andrew and St. Joseph. Large trees, plantains, sugar canes, and different crops of growing produce have been removed with their soil, and have continued to thrive in their new situation, as well as if they had remained undisturbed.

A very singular change of crop, and of soil, is said to have happened at the estate of a Mr. Foster, where a large portion of land, in the possession of a poor tenant near the

coast, suddenly journied into the sea ; and, while the unhappy man was bewailing the loss, not only of his crop, but likewise of the territory on which it was growing, the land of his neighbour, Mr. Foster, travelled to the spot, and brought to him a crop of canes, which continued to grow quite as well as before they took their journey.

On our approach to Col. Williams's, we were led into a fine valley of fruits, which offered us the most grateful refreshment that could have presented itself. We had been long riding in excessive heat, and were parching with thirst ; when the Colonel, without previously announcing it, conducted us to the point of a hill from which we suddenly viewed a rich and golden orchard below. Elevated as we were above the narrow gully in which the fruits were growing, our situation seemed in a degree vexatious and tantalizing—but the Colonel only tempted us, to augment our gratification, for we quickly descended, by a steep and confined path, into the midst of this region of sweets ; where, had the fruit been prohibited as the

fatal apple of our first parent, it had been scarcely possible we could have resisted the desire - - *of tasting* ! Such grateful—such delicious refreshment never before had met our lips ! The oranges were not only *ten times better* than the very best in the world ; but they were taken fresh from the tree, and at a moment of heat and parching thirst which was calculated to render them *ten thousand times* sweeter than the sweetest of themselves ! But without any hyperbolical flavor, they were, really, and in plain fact, very superior to any oranges I had ever tasted. We gathered and consumed them in dozens, and, after having most gratefully allayed our burning thirst, we proceeded to explore the extent, and the many exquisite productions of this bounteous orchard, by whose delicious fruit, and fragrant odour, three of our senses had been so sumptuously regaled : indeed I may say four, for, like Buffon's automaton upon gaining his existence, we gathered, and experienced a new sense of delight - - - from feeling the fruit.

The orchard is planted in a narrow gully between two hills, and is nearly half a

mile in length. It abounds in the various species of the orange tribe—oranges, shaddocks, limes, lemons, and forbidden fruit hanging in the most inviting profusion. The banana, the plantain, and divers other fruits are likewise plenteously intermixed. It is the employment of two negroes constantly to attend the orchard and protect the fruit. The oranges we most enjoyed, and which were esteemed the best in the colony, were from a tree nearly a hundred years old, and the largest upon the island. They were small, but of most exquisite flavor. I have formerly enjoyed oranges even in England, and have always held them a fine fruit; but after tasting the incomparable produce of the venerable centurian branch, I fear those to be met with in Britain will be insipid indeed.—If you don't feel a wish for tropical thirst, and some oranges from the Colonel's old tree, you ought never to know the true flavor of fruit!

Having made a most delicious repast in the sweet shaded valley, we again mounted our horses, and, after a short ride, arrived

at Col. Williams's house. Here we enjoyed the refreshment of cold water and a change of linen, and having taken a little time to rest ourselves, proceeded in great comfort to eat our dinners in the open air under the "social rock." Descending from the house by a steep path, we came into the valley, a short distance from the orchard, and passed under a large open arch of a rock, which formed the grand entrance to a suite of natural and romantic apartments. A little further in the gully we came to an excavation called the drawing-room; and, beyond this, under a stupendous and impending part of the rock, we found a smooth and level spot called the dining-room, which is sufficiently spacious to accommodate a hundred people. Here was placed the hospitable board, which is often and liberally spread by the friendly Colonel; and in this sequestered shade were assembled chairs, benches, wine, punch, fruit, and all that could contribute to the ease and comfort of wearied travellers. But, in truth, we were not of this class; for the gratification and high mental delight we had experienced, had prevented all sense of

bodily fatigue from our long and scorching ride.

We drank a glass of punch, and explored the deep caverns and various recesses of this rocky retreat before the dinner was served. About four o'clock we took our seats at table, having been in almost constant exercise from five in the morning. A hanging rock of madripores shaded us above and behind ; and, in the front, we had the breeze of the valley softly breaking its way to us through a plantation of bamboos and fragrant limes, while, immediately before us, smoking viands, rich wines, and delicious fruits crowned the board. Having endeavoured to provoke your thirst for the oranges of the valley, I might further urge your appetite in quest of the cray-fish soup of the "social rock," for I do not know that I ever tasted any dish so rich, or of such exquisite flavor. But tell not this to our friend - - - - the newly elected alderman, unless he can spare time for a trip to Barbadoes ; where he might feel compensated for the voyage, by feasting upon cray-fish soup, and centurian oranges under the "social rock ;"

or, if these should not suffice, I might ensure him an ample reward for his journey, in the society of the hospitable friends with whom we partook the feast.

In the evening the Colonel loaded us home with fruits from the orchard; but the party did not separate until our kind friends had planned for us a still more extensive marooning excursion; to which I need scarcely say we gave our most cordial consent. Our return to Bridge-Town was peculiarly pleasant: the moon shone bright: the heat was moderate, and we had quite the agreeable ride of an English summer evening. The distance is about eight miles; and as we descended from the higher to the lower land the air became perceptibly closer, until, at the town, the breeze seemed to desert us, and we, no longer, felt the cool perspiration, which had been so grateful to us in the more elevated parts of the island.

Never, perhaps, did a long and interesting day pass more pleasantly; nor was hospitality ever evinced with more friendly

urbanity. No attention was forgotten to render every thing comfortable and agreeable to us: no care was omitted to promote or forward our gratification. It seemed the object of all to offer us every possible accommodation, and to bring us acquainted, in the happiest manner, with the country and its inhabitants. We felt infinitely less of fatigue than might have been expected, from the great distance we had journied, and from the length of time we were exposed to heat, and exercise; and the only alloy which in any degree interrupted our enjoyment, throughout this grateful day, was a sense of suffering, of which we could not wholly divest ourselves concerning the poor slaves, who had to support, on foot, the very same journey which, in us, was regarded as a surprizing exertion on horseback.

In the course of the day we repeatedly made compassionate appeals to the gentlemen of the island concerning them, but they as constantly assured us that our pity was misplaced, adding that they were accustomed to the exercise, and would suffer

far less fatigue than ourselves. Still our European feelings forced upon us the wish that either they had been accommodated with mules, or we had dispensed with their attendance; and it will require a much longer residence, amidst this new order of things, before we shall be able to persuade ourselves that our sense of disquietude was only a misplaced humanity.

Upon reaching the Lord Sheffield we experienced some diminution of our pleasurable feelings, by hearing that the Belfast transport, with troops, was taken and carried into Guadalope; which intelligence had been brought by the captain of an American ship, who had been detained by the captors while they removed the prisoners.

I should have told you that in the course of our long ride we had the opportunity of seeing a very extensive variety of the vegetable productions of the tropical world; and that we met with multitudes of trees, shrubs, and plants, that were not before familiar to us—and many which were wholly new

to our observation. Among those which most attracted our attention were the pimento, wild cinnamon, ginger, cassia, cassada, banana, plantain, tamarind, cashew apple, mango, sapadillo, papaw, mammee, fourfop, goava, grenadillo, water lemon, oranges, limes, lemons, shaddock, forbidden fruit, the aloe, logwood, mahogany, cedar, and *lignum vitæ*. The great staple productions of the West Indies,—sugar, cotton, and coffee, were also brought frequently before the eye, during this interesting excursion.

It appeared to us somewhat remarkable that, in the whole extent of our tour, we should not have seen any pines growing, except at one spot near Hilloughby hill, where they were regularly planted as the crop of part of a sugar field. The fruit was not ripe; and therefore we had no opportunity of comparing its flavor with that of the pines of our English hot-houses; and, consequently, none of judging whether the cultivation of this plant is one of those circumstances, as some have asserted, in which art has been made to rival, or even to surpass the works of nature. Improbable as this

would seem, upon a first view of the great perfection of nature's productions, still a further consideration renders it more than possible ; for, if animals can be improved by culture ; if the apple and the cabbage can be rendered more useful, the pink and the tulip more beautiful, by the hand of man ; and, if the powers of our organs of vision can be enlarged by his researches in the science of optics ; what is there that shall prevent him from enriching the flavor of a tropical fruit, in a temperate climate ? It would seem, indeed, to require only an accurate and steady attention to the laws, and operations of nature herself—not with a view to oppose or distort the beautiful harmony of her works—but to profit of the great lesson she so liberally displays, by directing, towards the one great object of our care, those means which she is busied in supplying to all. Her bounty is not confined to one plant, or one animal, but is unlimited as the universe. It belongs to her not only to foster the fragrant pine, and the honied cane, but with equal care, to give pungency to capsicum, and bitterness to the aloe.

If the growth and flavor of a pine depend upon a certain degree of heat and light, with a due proportion of air and moisture—all these we have in England; and, from careful observation, we may enable ourselves to supply to this, or any other particular plant, the necessary quantum of these elements with a more undeviating certainty, than will commonly be done by nature; she having to dispense her means, not to one root alone, but to all creation. The particular degree of moisture necessary for the pine might injure the neighbouring coffee—the appropriate quantity of air, might not be the exact proportion required by the cotton—or the precise ratio of light and heat might differ from that demanded by the sugar cane! But where man commands the disposal he may direct the elements, in due degree, to his exotic nursling, and, avoiding the irregularities of the natural climate, may learn to cultivate, and to improve, at home, what nature never gave to his native soil.

What a lesson of industry is here taught us, my friend! How flattering is this fact to the

progressive powers of our species; and how strongly does it invite to their expansion! How immense, how boundless is the field which it opens to new gratification and enjoyment in the government of the vegetable world: and how seducingly does it invite us to the exercise of those talents, which all-bountiful nature hath so liberally bestowed on man! But the subject would lead me beyond the limits of a letter, however delightful, therefore, I must not pursue it here.

LETTER XXVI.

Convoys and packet still delayed. Single vessels arrive. Transports taken by the enemy. Inhabitants anxious to have the troops employed. Sailors desert from the Lord Sheffield. Alarm concerning a boat's crew. Ours employed as sails. Negroes in slave ships taught to be useful. Captains of Guineamen walk on shore with parties of the ship's cargo. Book-binding not among the trades of Barbadoes. Preparations for an excursion to Hackleton's cliff. The church at Bridge-Town. The signal code.

Barbadoes, Feb.

WE still remain without any accurate intelligence respecting the great body of our convoy: and, having no tidings of the commander in chief, we continue in equal uncertainty when we may proceed to our original destination, at St. Domingo. All here is suspense and anxiety. The solicitude of the mercantile world is not less than that of the military. No packet is arrived; the affairs of commerce are interrupted; we have no news of Europe or the war, and all seems shut in ignorance, or absorbed in painful uncertainty. Straggling vessels of our disastrous fleet con-

tinue to arrive ; and, from these, we catch with eagerness, every report, but still without acquiring any thing satisfactory. Some separated on one day ; some another ; and some another : but with respect to the actual state of the convoy all is still enveloped in doubt and incertitude.

Most unhappily our disappointment and our regrets are further augmented by the painful intelligence of frequent captures being made by the enemy's privateers. From the vessels coming out, in this dispersed and divided manner, the cruisers, from Guadalupe, are but too successful, in picking up numbers of our unarmed, and unprotected transports.

A ship which arrived this day reports that she parted from the Admiral and a hundred sail of the convoy, on the seventh of January, in latitude 45, longitude 17. This is received, by some, as favorable intelligence, it seeming to strengthen the hope that the fleet has not been under the necessity of again putting back to Cork, or Spithead. But it is now so long since the seventh

of January, and we have known in the interval such violent,—such repeated and long continued gales, that, to many of us, this news is equally unsatisfactory as all we had heard before. So little does it meet our hopes, that we have still many apprehensions lest the majority of the convoy may have been obliged to return to Ireland or to England. Between five and six thousand troops have reached Barbadoes in the ships already arrived, and the inhabitants of the Islands express sad regret and impatience at seeing such a body of men remain so long unemployed. Looking to the spot most in danger, or concerning which they feel a more immediate interest, they wish that to be made secure, forgetful, that were the troops to be divided as they might wish, and detached on different services, before the arrival of the commander in chief, with the remainder of the armament, the great object of the expedition might, thereby, be altogether defeated.

Unhappily the finest season is passing away—and before the whole army can have arrived, and be brought into action, the rainy

period will be fast approaching ; but, as many of the men already here are in a sickly state, we hope the delay may prove beneficial to them, by affording them an opportunity of recovering from the ills of the voyage, and of their long confinement on board, before they enter upon the fatigues of the campaign. They are daily taken on shore to relieve them from the close atmosphere of the transports; and, from being regularly exercised, they will have the advantage of becoming, in some degree, acclimates previous to being ordered upon actual service.

A report is current here that the Spanish part of the island of St. Domingo has refused to submit to the French ; and that the governor has sent down to Jamaica to demand protection from the English. If such be the fact, it leads to additional regret respecting the unfortunate delays of this powerful armament : a very considerable part of which is supposed to be destined for St. Domingo.

We learn from our captain that an alarming desertion is taking place among the sailors of his ship. Six have already ab-

scended, and the number of our crew is reduced to fourteen. This intelligence makes us apprehensive lest, by the time we sail for St. Domingo, we may not have enough hands to work the ship. But we are consoled in the recollection that the friendly trades will be directly in our favor; and that we cannot require so strong a ship's company as amidst the terrific, and adverse gales which so long beset us on our passage hither.

A sad alarm has spread throughout the harbour, and we have been all in vivid and anxious concern, respecting the fate of twelve men who went out in a flat-bottomed boat to consign to the deep bosom of the ocean, the body of a deceased shipmate. Desirous not to throw over the corpse within the harbour, where it would be instantly devoured by the numerous sharks which infest the bay, and which we see almost daily stealing round the vessels in search of prey, they rowed so far out to sea as to be unable to pull back again; and the tide being against them, their heavy boat, notwithstanding all their efforts to row her into the harbour, was set adrift, and carried

out into the wide Atlantic, with all hands on board. The captain finding it long before his men returned, grew very apprehensive regarding their safety. A general alarm spread throughout the bay; and extending likewise to the shore, multitudes soon covered the beach, while the shrouds, and yards of the ships, were thronged with anxious crowds looking out for the funeral party. No boat appeared, and the fears respecting the perilous situation of the party becoming universal, two schooners were dispatched in search of them. Happily the weather and the waves were moderate, or the whole had certainly been lost, for the boat was found adrift at open sea! Fortunately all the men were in her, and were brought back in safety to the harbour, expressing themselves very thankful for their unexpected deliverance from the jaws of hungry ocean.

A strong contrast, to the dangerous situation of these poor men, was offered in the repose of some other boats' crews, whom we perceived sitting at rest in their boats, and sailing about the harbour by means of their oars; a custom which we find to be common

here ; for we often see parties of negroes, boatmen, and sailors, scud indolently about the bay, employing their oars by way of sails. They fix the handles of them at the bottom of the boat, and setting them up, two on each side, with the flat surface to the wind, collect a sufficiency of the breeze to carry the boat along without the trouble of rowing,

The captains of the Guineamen often relieve their ships' company from the duty of the boat, by training some of their black cargo to the use of the oar.—Indeed so useful do many of the negroes become, during the passage, and the time they are detained on board, that their assistance is of much service in working the vessel. We occasionally see the master of a slave ship rowed ashore by four of his naked Africans, who appear as dexterous, in the management of the boat, as if they had been for years accustomed to it.

Often we observe the captains parading the streets, accompanied by parties of their prime slaves—apparently with the intention of exhibiting them to the eye of the public, in sound state and good condition. This

contributes, at the same time, to the health and amusement of these poor beings, who seem delighted at feeling their feet on shore, and, in due obedience to their captain, dance and frolic as they go along, either in real, or in well dissembled contentment and happiness.

I made a visit on shore this morning in the intention of leaving some books to be bound, which, you will remember, I brought out, in sheets, from the printer ; but you will be surprised to learn that no such person as a book-binder could be found in Barbadoes. We called on Mr. Hinde, and were informed that, by the assistance of his friends Messrs. Jordan and Maxwell, he had provided horses for our intended "*Marooning* party" to Hackleton's Cliff, and the northern coast of the island ; when, upon our apologizing for being so troublesome to him, and his friends, and observing that we had sent our servants to hire horses for the journey, he replied that no apologies could be necessary, for it would be " quite inconsistent with Barbadoes to suffer strangers to have the trouble of procuring horses, or of seeking, for themselves,

the accommodations of a country excursion."

Mr. Hinde accompanied us in our walk to different parts of the town, and to see the church, which is a plain and neat edifice, built much upon the plan of Greenwich chapel; the interior is fitted up with enclosed seats of cedar, regularly constructed in the modern style. It is also furnished with a handsome organ.

The ship being made our head quarters, it is a great source of amusement to us while we remain in harbour, to observe the different signals made at the flag staff, at the entrance of the Bay, when any vessels appear within sight. Indeed the hourly expectation of the fleet has made the signal-staff so much an object of our study, that scarcely a flag can be hoisted but we instantly comprehend the intelligence it is meant to convey to the Governor, at Pilgrim, from whence the signals are answered. Master, in particular, is become such an adept in this science, and is so entirely *au fait* to the signal code, that, should a vacancy occur, during our continu-

ance here, it is proposed to recommend *Dr. Robert Master*, phyfician to the forces, as a proper perfon for the appointment of *Signal-Master-General*, for Carlisle bay, and the whole of the bays and promontories of his Majesty's ifland of Barbadoes.

LETTER XXVII.

Marooning excursion to the windward coast of Barbadoes. Harrison's Cave. Sugar Hill. Joes River. Unhappy fate of the Rev. Mr. H. its late possessor. Bay-house. Beer-sheba. Animal sewer. Hackleton's cliff. Mules of the Alps. Ginger plantation. Colleton estate. Urbanity of Mr. Hollingsworth and family. Codrington college. Coach Hill. Negroes dine in the open field exposed to the sun. Mode of claying sugar. Eccentric manager of Kendall estate. Drax-hall. Barbadoes one of the "Friendly Isles." Spendlove estate. Hospitality and benevolence of Mr. John Waith. Fat people not uncommon in Barbadoes. Gratitude of slaves. Negro privileges. Picturesque scenery of a Negro yard. Market held on Sunday. Supplied by Negroes. Sprats, lobsters, and milk punch served after dinner. Mr. Waith, sen. invites the Party to a Barbadoes farmer's dinner. Disappointment respecting Mr. Ellcock's botanical collection. Compensation by recommending it to the attention of Dr. Wright. General remarks concerning the excursion.

Barbadoes, Feb. 27. 1796

WE have made our projected Marooning excursion to Hackleton's Cliff, and the windward coast of the island, as planned by our friends at the "social rock," and how often, in the course of it, did my thoughts wander to another friend, wishing yet one addition to the party!

On the 23d inst. we went off before six in the morning to Bridge-Town, where we found slaves, horses, and every necessary for the journey, provided by the friendly Mr. Hinde, and in readiness for our departure. It was arranged, that we should avail ourselves of the early part of the day, by proceeding to Col. Williams's before breakfast. The morning was dull; the sky lowered, and it threatened rain; but none fell, and from the sun being obscured, the air was pleasantly cool.

We rode slowly as far as Dr. Hinde's, where we were joined by the Doctor, and Mr. Abel Hinde, and Mr. Jordan. Upon our arrival at Col. Williams's, we found the breakfast board most bounteously spread, and the Col. prepared to take an active part in the expedition. After breakfasting with good appetite, and being well rested and refreshed, we left the "social rock," to pursue our route, in the true Marooning spirit of making a home whenever we might require it, or wheresoever we might find it, availing ourselves of whatever dwelling might present itself in our path. The first object which met

our attention was within about half a mile of the Col.'s house, where we stopped to explore one of the greatest natural curiosities of the Island—a very extensive subterraneous cavern, called “Harrison’s Cave.” Its hidden mouth opens among the rocks of a deep narrow gully, between two lofty hills. There we forsook the world of light, and descended into the dark regions of the earth, in order to advance to the bottom of the sombre depths before us. Our way was intricate and obscure. Taking with us three Negroes, with lights, we descended by narrow windings, or spacious openings, by broad walks, or narrow crooked paths, over loose stones, or rocky steeps. At one moment we found ourselves under a fine arch or dome, hung with clusters of petrifications; at another we were in a narrow aisle, whose walls, and impending vault, faintly glittered with multiform incrustations. By the senses of feeling and hearing, more than by sight, we judged of the varying uncertainty of our situation, and advanced in perilous step—now confined, now in more open space, until we reached a spot where we came to a gentle rivulet, softly stealing along its subterraneous bed in a pure

and crystal stream. A few soft rays, gleaming from above, silvered over the surface, and exhibited all the purity of this limpid current, conveying, amidst some similitudes of situation and of scene, precisely the reverse of the dismal waters of Acheron, which are represented by the poets, as wandering in the gloomy dark, where

Above no sky is seen ; below
A turbid wave is seen to flow.

But here the sky did appear above, for it was seen at a circular opening, cut through the soil and the solid rock, to the depth of thirty or forty fathoms, and resembled the pale moon, or the brighter orb of day, divested of his fiery redness, and his golden beams. The wave, too, was any thing but turbid ; indeed, it was so invitingly clear and pure, that we were tempted to drink of its limpid stream.

Together with our artificial lights, the mild rays from the opening above, penetrating to the very bottom of the cave, displayed the hanging tubes of stalactites, and the various surrounding petrifications, in a peculiarly interesting and romantic manner :

“ Here incrustations strike the eyes :
 There spangled domes, with lustre bright,
 Beam down an artificial light ;
 Whence pensive hang, in gothic shew,
 Descending to the sands below,
 Fantastic forms——.”

After contemplating the fine pellucid stream, and the pendant vaults, the arches, and recesses around, we proceeded onwards to a considerable distance beyond the rivulet, until the intricate path became more and more difficult, and the gloomy cavern seemed to close upon us in dark, and endless deep. The feeble taper now scarcely illumined the spot whereon we stood, while all before us was buried in the profoundest darkness. The path grew still more uncertain and irregular : here we bent our persons almost double to pass under a rugged arch ; there descended a sudden steep ; then, again, we had to scramble up a craggy and projecting mass : presently we turned the sharp corner of a rock, into a narrow passage, between huge walls of stone ; next we opened into a more spacious vault ; soon our way was again confined, or our heads struck the hanging petrifications above. At one moment we trod on the firm rock, at

another our steppings were upon loose stones, and, perhaps, the following instant we found our feet in water, or upon damp earth : now we seemed to have reached the utmost depth of the cave—then we stepped suddenly into a wide space. At length we reached the farthest extent that had been explored, but unlimited windings seemed yet to lead on, in dark and terrific gloom, to the very centre of the earth.

Having no other lights than two or three open tapers, we did not feel it prudent to venture farther into passages unexplored, and more particularly as the road we had passed, had been so obscure and perplexing that, in case of any accident occurring to extinguish our light, we might not have been able to have traced our way back, to the mouth of the cave. Hence we declined proceeding any deeper into this silent tomb of the earth ; and turned about to retrace our steps to a brighter scene. Feeling better assured respecting our path we now more leisurely contemplated the stupendous walls of rock, the varied incrustations, and ponderous masses of stalactites, the multitudes of mad-

ripores, and other calcareous concretions, formed by nature from the limpid distilling drop, which were seen on all sides, also above and below, and hanging round about our heads in an endless variety of romantic and fanciful forms.

The air, in most parts of the cave, was confined and warm, but, occasionally, we felt it damp and chilly. On our way back, at a narrow pass, where we had been obliged to bend low the knee in order to creep under the arch of a rock, we perceived it rush in strong current; and here the whole of our lights were suddenly extinguished, and we were shut in the dark and hollow bowels of the earth, unable to explore our way to the mouth of the cavern. Unhappily, too, we were confined in a damp current of air, where we were compelled to stand shivering with cold, while Col. Williams and the Negroes, who had been often in the cave, felt their way, at great hazard, to the opening, to procure new lights. We remained buried in the silent seclusion of this subterraneous abode for nearly an hour; and when the distant sound of our conductor's feet returned

upon our ears, and the soft glimmerings of light again stole into the solemn depths of the cave, the effect was uncommonly striking and beautiful. Watching carefully as the negroes approached, we at one moment saw the rays of light gleam upon their dark skins, gilding them as it were with fire, and giving them the appearance of the sons of Satan. Presently we lost them in profound obscurity, then again, the imperfect rays stretched towards us, and at one moment we saw indistinctly the blacks descend from a rock, and at another perceived them suddenly rise as from the deep. Again the light disappeared and we only heard their distant hollow sounding steps: then they escaped from a narrow passage or confined recess, and were seen stepping forth under an open and spacious arch, where the heavy rocks, the vaulted dome, the petrified columns, the massy tubes, and impending clusters of glittering concretions, together with the solemn echo, the fiery blackness of the negroes, and the spreading rays of artificial light, partially absorbed, or feebly reflected, produced an effect, which was awfully romantic and sublime.

In such a situation, buried in darkness and sepulchral silence, you will agree that it required but little aid of fancy to create pictures of horror, or to figure to the imagination the mighty abode of terrors and of punishments. Call to your recollection the effect sometimes produced at the theatre, when the lights are withdrawn, and a few imperfect rays are thrown upon the dark skins of negroes, and you will readily allow that when our eyes first caught these Africans, at a distant part of the cavern, it scarcely required the powers of fancy to convert them into demons of darkness, approaching us with the tormenting flames of their dread parent; and you may suppose us tracing in our minds the various degrees of punishment merited by the wicked, each of the party fixing upon that to which his secret feelings seemed to consign him. Such an association did actually occupy our minds, and in stillness we watched the approach of these spirits of darkness, while the awful gloom around us, the oblivious seclusion, the dead silence, the occasional gleamings of imperfect light, and the sable skins of the negroes obfuscated by the partial rays, all conspired to fix our contempla-

tions to the mansions of the wicked ; and by the time these fable beings had reached us, we had so powerfully traced the images of the black spirits below, that it was difficult to persuade ourselves they were only black bodies, bringing us lights from above.

But the voice of the good Colonel, who had accompanied them, soon roused us from our reverie, and reminded us that, however dismal our abode, it was not that bourn from whence no travellers return : we now hastened to change our bed of darkness for brighter regions, but were obliged to tread our way in cautious steps towards the exit of the cave, for the path was intricate and perilous. As we approached the opening we extinguished the artificial lights, in order to enjoy the appearance of the soft rays which stole in at the entrance of the cave, richly gilding the rocks and petrifications, and gradually though irregularly increasing until we again met the brightness of day.

At our first escaping from the cave, the strong light of a tropical sun, falling through the widely dilated pupils of our eyes, produced a considerable degree of pain, we there-

fore remained a short time in the gully before we again mounted our horses; and then proceeded to a point called Sugar-hill, from whence we obtained an extensive and very beautiful view of the parishes of Scotland, and the romantic parts of the island which we had before visited.

Near to Sugar-hill we called at a cottage to give directions for some oranges to be sent down to the "Bay-house," a place we were to visit *en route*. Here we met with two fair cottagers, the healthy looking daughters of the old dame of the house, who, though less ruddy, were not less smiling than the lovely and blooming peasants of old England; and who, notwithstanding the want of rosy bloom, had pretty English faces.

After enjoying the sweet views of Sugar-hill, and witnessing the sweeter smiles of the neighbouring young cottagers, we were conducted to the home of a Mr. Haynes, where we were received with a warm Barbadoes greeting, and welcomed with frankness and a cordial hospitality. We rested only a few minutes, when Mr. Haynes and his son join-

ed our party, and accompanied us to a neighbouring estate called "Joe's River," a most beautiful spot, and quite the elysium of the island. Until lately it has been in the possession of the Rev. Mr. H., a man of much genius and learning, whose loss is deeply regretted by all, but more particularly by the literati of the island. He was a scientific botanist, and as much respected for his literary talents, and extensive information, as revered for his benevolent and social disposition.

The house is finely situated on elevated ground near the sea, surrounded with extensive plantations of the choicest trees and tropical fruits. The garden and orchard had long been the devoted objects of his care. It was his wish to procure an useful and ornamental assemblage of all the rare fruits and plants of the tropical regions: and in this intention he had already obtained a numerous and valuable collection, which, through his industry and perseverance, was almost daily increasing. His private hours were passed in literary pursuits. Much of his time was de-

voted to his favorite study of Natural History, and to realizing the improvements suggested by his contemplations. In society he was convivial; to his slaves he was kind and humane; and, possessing great urbanity, he was benevolent and friendly to all.

The fates that rule our destiny are said to be blind; and you will agree that they must indeed have wanted sight, when you are told that they have thrown this esteemed and valuable man into dire distress, and robbed him of the powers of his enriched and highly ornamented mind. Bereft of his mental faculties, of all those fine and comprehensive talents which so adorned and honored him, both as a priest and a man, he now languishes in sadness and misfortune, lost to his friends, and the world; and the happy dwelling which was graced by hospitality and benevolence, enriched by industry, and dignified by science; that delightful home, the object of his anxious cares and studies, as well as the proud and just boast of the island, is now left to fall into ruin and decay. The broken walls, the hidden paths, the shattered doors and win-

dows, the wild neglected trees, the obtrusive weeds, and half covered walks all bespeak, in doleful decline, its former beauty; and while they create a scene, at once romantic and picturesque, excite the most painful feelings of regret, and lead to gloomy reflections concerning the instability of all earthly things. The objects around convey the image of the master's now disordered mind, and the whole place seems to deplore in sympathetic sadness the melancholy derangement of his once rare and splendid faculties: and truly may it be said that Joe's river mourns the shattered intellect, and participates, in soft and fast withering sorrow, the afflicting ills that have befallen this distinguished ornament of Barbadoes.

Having viewed every part of this interesting estate, with a minuteness of attention which was merited, equally by its situation and improvements, as by the painful history of its late accomplished owner, we left it with regret, earnestly sympathizing with our friends in the sad loss they so heavily and so justly deplored.

We now proceeded to the sea-side, and our next place of call was at a cottage termed the Bay-house, a neat little building erected by Mr. Haynes, under a rock upon the open beach, to serve as a place of rest and refreshment for such of his friends, and, in great truth may we say, his friends' friends, who may chance to visit the windward coast. We found it the rendezvous of entertainment and repose. Intimation had been conveyed to the generous owner that it might perhaps be in our way to make an *en passant* visit at the Bay-house, and he had availed himself of the information to provide a rich and bountiful repast. All the good things of the island seemed to have been collected. The whole neighbourhood had been ransacked for our convenience and accommodation. The best productions from all quarters were directed hither to supply the hospitable board. Cook, butler, fishermen, servants, and slaves were all assembled to give their attendance. The net was thrown into the sea immediately before the door, and the fishes that were taken were presently smoking upon the table; fruits, wines, meat, poultry, and vegetables were brought in loads, and made only a part

of the feast of this little cottage, built by generous hospitality, and dedicated to friendship and social harmony. A supply of provisions was likewise collected for the refreshment of our slaves and horses, and these were regaled with no less liberality than their masters — the friendly hospitality of the “Bay-house” being extended equally to all.

Punch and mandram were served to us before dinner, the one to quench our thirst, the other to provoke the appetite; and soon afterwards were set before us a variety of dishes, consisting of boiled, stewed, and broiled fish, a cold roasted lamb, a cold turkey, fowls, tongues, cray-fish, and a multitude of other good things. After we had dined very abundantly the table was covered with punch, a variety of excellent wines, and several species of fruit. Among the latter was a fine pine, the first we had tasted in the island. I do not know that the flavor was superior to that of some of the pines I have tasted from the hot-houses of England, although it certainly was very exquisite: but I must taste again, and often, before I hazard a general opinion upon this subject.

Having plentifully refreshed ourselves, and the slaves and horses being well fed and rested, we called the negroes from their desert of rolling and basking in the sun, and proceeded upon our journey. To our great surprise, at the very moment the horses appeared at the door for our departure, a large dish of sprats, smoking from the gridiron, and an immense bowl of milk-punch, were set before us. This was quite a West Indian addition to the repast. Having eaten very heartily, and indulged in copious libations, we had already done even too much, in the way of feasting, but, to my great astonishment, some of the party partook with a renewal of appetite which was rather indicative of sitting down to dinner, than of rising from table. At two o'clock we had commenced with punch; after which came the mandram; at three was served the dinner: busy eating and drinking continued until five; and then appeared the sprats, and bowl of milk-punch: thus did nearly four hours pass in high banquetting and conviviality at this social cottage. At length, due honors having been done to the punch and sprats, we again put ourselves *en route*, the party being increased by the ad-

dition of Mr. Haynes jun., who accompanied us throughout the remainder of the day. We rode along the sands to a spot called Beer-sheba, which is used as a natural bathing place, among the rocks, and from thence proceeded to a large mass of rocks, lying in the water, near to the edge of the sea, where we had the expectation of seeing a very curious natural production called the animal flower. But here we were unluckily disappointed; for the tide being in, the sea running high, and the wind strong, we were unable to reach the spot where this phænomenon of nature is usually found.

Although we lost the opportunity of seeing it, I cannot refrain from giving you the account of this uncommon flower, and its dwelling place, as communicated to us by our brother Maroons. It is as follows:—Within a deep cave, formed in the rock, is a spacious natural basin of water, which is about eleven feet above low water mark. It is collected from the sea beating into the cave in rough weather; and hence, that which lodges in this basin is entirely salt water, except a very small admixture from rain, which

distils in drops, through the small openings of the rock. In the middle of the basin is a large stone, or piece of detached rock, which is usually covered with water. About this stone, and adhering to its sides, as if growing therefrom, are seen numbers of apparently beautiful flowers, finely variegated in vivid colours, and of radiated form, somewhat resembling the petals of the garden marigold. Some are of a pale yellow, or a light straw colour, tinged with green; others of a greyish purple, variegated with black spots.

To gather any of these seeming flowers is a task of difficulty, for when the hand approaches them, the beautiful petals instantly contract, and become invisible. If left undisturbed they re-appear, in the course of a few minutes, gradually expanding into their former bloom; but again retire, with surprising quickness, on the approach of the hand, a cane, or any other body that may be directed towards them.

This circumstance, as you will expect, led to early investigation regarding the nature of this singular flower, when, instead of a fine

blowing vegetable, it was discovered to be an animal that was decorated with all this gaiety of colouring ; and hence the name " animal flower."

On examination the body is found to be of a blackish hue, less than an inch in length, and about a quarter of an inch in thickness. It adheres by one end to the rock, and from the other extremity, which projects outwards, are thrown off a number of fine membranous filaments, in a radiated and circular form ; and from the point or head, at the centre of this circle, project four long slender fibrils, not unlike the legs of the spider. Thus, while the body appears as the calyx, and the expanded filaments as the petals, these fibrils serving as the stamina, complete the resemblance of a regular and beautiful flower.

It has been suggested, that as this animal is almost wholly deprived of locomotive power, the fine colours, given to the membranous filaments, serve as a provision of nature, to allure and bring within its reach the smaller insects, upon which it feeds ; and from the quick spontaneous motion of the

fine central threads, from side to side, or round the whole border of the radiated circle, these would seem to be designed to act as forceps, for conveying the food to the mouth, the extended filaments serving as *antennæ*, or feelers, to discover the prey, and from their contractile power enclosing it, when seized, as in a purse, or sacculus, until it is devoured. With much disappointment at not being able to see this natural curiosity of the island, we left the coast, in order to ascend the mountainous summit, called Hackleton's Cliff, —the only spot which disputes with Hilloughby hill the claim of being the loftiest point of Barbadoes. The path was rugged, and singularly precipitate. To walk up it was a degree of fatigue which, it was insisted, Europeans ought not to encounter; and to ride was not free from danger, besides being a cruel labour to the poor horses. But as it was contended that they would better support the toil than ourselves, we were induced to continue upon our saddles, although, indeed, with much difficulty, from the rapid rising of the ascent. By stopping frequently to let the poor animals recover their breath, we did, at length, reach the summit; but never before

had I sat upon a horse to climb so steep a mountain. In the Alps of Switzerland, and of Savoy, it is not unusual to ride small horses, called Mountain Ponies, over the lesser hills; but previous to ascending the more lofty and steeper mountains these are always changed for mules; and with them I have often ventured up ascents even more nearly perpendicular than Hackleton's Cliff. But the mule is a more quiet, a more enduring, and more patient animal. He is not irascible and impetuous like the horse, and moreover, in such situations he is so accustomed to the climbing of mountains, that he appears sensible of all the dangers around him, and is careful in every movement, to consult the safety of himself and his rider. Only give him the bridle, or as the guides say, "*laissez lui aller*," and in the most perilous situations you need not feel yourself in any danger. His sagacity is equal to his care: he looks with caution at each stepping, and he knows his foot to be secure, before he ventures to bear upon it the weight of his body. I remember to have rode at first, in much fear and trembling; but upon witnessing the dexterity of the animal my terrors gave way to

astonishment ; and my astonishment gradually yielded to a placid security, until, at length, I could throw the rein upon the neck of the mule, and regard the frightful precipices, and imminent dangers around us, without any apprehension.

In the Alps a mule will carry you up mountains which are so steep as to appear from the valley quite perpendicular, proceeding by a narrow path, in which he cannot possibly turn himself round, and passing close by the edge of the most terrific precipices, climbing only by means of irregular holes made among the roots of trees, or step-pings roughly broken in the rock ; yet have you only to give him the bridle and sit still, holding by the mane to keep yourself from slipping back, and you are in the utmost safety.

But I must return from the Alps, and tell you that in consequence of our feasting delay at the Bay-house, and the time required to ascend the cliff, we found the evening stealing upon us before we came to the top. The sun had already sunk too low, to

gild the landscape with its rays, or to enliven the view of the ocean, with the brightness which shone upon our visit to Hilloughby hill; but, from what I have already said of that, your imagination will readily suggest to you the beauties of the scenery, and the extent of the prospect from Hackleton's Cliff. From viewing the delightful variety around, under the descending rays of declining day, the effect was new and pleasing. A soft and placid picture succeeded to the strong and vivid colours of noon: the landscape, though less bright, was, perhaps, not less interesting; and, as we had visited Mount Hilloughby in the full glow of day, we did not lament that we saw Hackleton's Cliff under the gentle and retiring beams of evening.

Unexpectedly we found the top of the cliff to be a wide extended surface, covered with herbage, and so gradually declining on the opposite side, that on turning our faces from the steep precipice of the east, we appeared to be upon a wide plain, instead of a rude summit, or nearly the highest point of land in the island. On the cliff we visited the estate of Mr. Stewart, at which is a pleasant

house, delightfully situated, near the most lofty part of this high summit, bearing no appearance of being so elevated, or within so short a distance of the stupendous precipice which is near to it.

Ginger is the produce of the plantation. We saw great quantities of this root spread before the house, upon a large square neatly paved, for the purpose of drying it previous to sending it to market.

From Mr. Stewart's we proceeded to the Colleton estate, where we purposed taking up our quarters for the night. On our way I happened to learn that the gentleman of the house was not apprized of our intended visit; and on discovering this, it seemed to me only a necessary civility to acquaint him with it, I therefore proposed that we should dispatch an *avant courier* to announce our approach, lest, from descrying so large a party, unexpectedly, the family might verily believe us to be a horde of Maroons; or, still worse, might mistake us for a foraging party of *citoyens-soldats*, coming to levy contributions upon the estate; but I was desired to suspend

my anxiety, and be assured that we should not fail to meet with good accommodations, and a sincere welcome, by only announcing ourselves *in propriis personibus*; and this information proved to be perfectly correct, for Mr. Hollingsworth greeted us cordially, and entertained us in all the genuine hospitality of the island. Eight visitors, eight slaves, and eight horses, thus dropping in unexpectedly, and at night, were received with such kindness and unaffected urbanity as to assure us that thrice the number would have been joyfully welcomed. No cold, nor forbidding ceremony; no seeming hurry nor confusion; no derangement of the household appeared. We were all immediately at home; no mark of surprize, or inconvenience was evinced; not an individual was incommoded; the duties of the family were continued; nor was there the slightest mark of interruption in any department of this hospitable home. The usual order was maintained, and it only appeared as though we were a part of the family. The *mauvaise honte*, the confusion and embarrassment but too common, upon similar occasions in England, were utterly unknown; and we at once belonged to the family. The

brimming punch-bowl was set before us, and pleasant lively conversation prevailed until supper called us to further feasting, which continued until the hour of repose. After supper Miss Hollingsworth kindly, as sweetly, added soft melody to complete the harmony of the entertainment.

We retired to rest, according to the custom of the country, at an early hour. Drs. Master, Cleghorn, and myself were accommodated in one spacious room. It was the first night we slept on shore, and you will judge of the temperature of these regions, when I tell you that, in this cool part of the most Windward Island, and in the month of February, we set open the windows of the room, and threw aside all the bedding and clothes, preserving to each person only a hard mattress, and a single sheet. With this arrangement we passed the night in sound repose, and rose at six in the morning, well prepared for another marooning day.

We rode before breakfast to see the Barbadoes or Codrington College. On our way we passed an estate called "Society," and on

approaching the college from the high land of that quarter we obtained a fine view of the building, with the plain on which it stands, and the wide expanse of the sea, spread before it. Descending from the hill we met with the finest avenue of mountain cabbage trees that we had seen in the island.

The college was founded by Colonel Codrington, and richly endowed, with the generous and very laudable intention of establishing a great and useful seminary for the education of the youth of Barbadoes; the liberal founder appropriating the revenue of two large estates to the institution, in the desire of affording an opportunity to the Creole generations of the island, of acquiring learning, and fitting themselves for the important duties of society, and of their individual stations, without incurring the expence of an European education. But the benevolent intentions of the Colonel have not been duly regarded. The profits intended for this best of purposes have been squandered away, and the funds disgracefully neglected or abused. The superb edifice, which was planned, has not been finished, and even

the part that was erected, has, from shameful neglect, been brought into early decay. Only one side of the intended quadrangle has yet been built, and that, to the disgrace of those concerned, has long been left to fall into ruin.

The present manager, highly to his honor, has done much towards recovering the estates, and directing the funds, arising therefrom, into their proper channel. By his care a very considerable sum has been recently accumulated, and the part of the building which has been erected, is now undergoing a thorough repair, in the hope of saving it from utter and premature destruction.

The walls are built of stone, and are of uncommon strength. They withstood the dreadful hurricane of 1780, and appear to be still capable of a complete repair, but it must be at great labor, and a prodigious expence.

As we were viewing the large hall, and the chapel, we received a message from the master, the Rev. Mr. Thomas, requesting us to take breakfast with him : but our plan for

the day, and our engagements with Mr. Hollingsworth did not allow us to accept the invitation. We however had an opportunity of thanking him, by making him a visit in the house built for the principal of the college, which we were sorry to observe, like the other parts of the structure, had been left unheeded, and was falling into comparatively youthful decay. Mr. Thomas shewed us a model in wood, according to the original design; and, had the building been completed upon this plan, Barbadoes might have boasted a college, vying in grandeur, and elegance of structure, with the greatest ornaments of the celebrated universities of the mother-country. The model, like the building, feeling the destructive effect of the climate, and of sad neglect, was fast crumbling into a state, in which it could only serve to minister dust to the elements!

Twelve boys, only, are yet admitted on the foundation, and these, instead of occupying any part of the college building, are accommodated in the house of the master, the parlour being converted into a kind of a school-room, for the purpose.

We returned to Mr. Hollingsworth's by a different road, from that we had taken in going, ascending some high land near the college, called "Coach-Hill." This ride afforded us an opportunity of seeing a numerous gang of negroes grouped in the middle of a field, taking their breakfast, during the temporary suspension allowed them from labor. They were seated upon the bare earth, and exposed to the full ardor of the scorching sun.

On our arrival we found a handsome breakfast prepared for us, and neatly served in a large cool room, with all the taste and fashion of the West Indies. While partaking of it I several times detected my thoughts wandering to the poor blacks in the field, contemplating the simplicity of their fare, and the humble natural board on which it was spread. They had no water-glasses to cool their fingers, nor had they, like us, a youthful slave to fan the breeze with a fragrant bough, and protect their naked skins from the painful annoyance of insects.

The Colleton estate is one of the largest in the island. It is, at present, the property of a Mrs. Colleton, who resides in London. The direction and sole management of it is left to Mr. Hollingsworth ; and Mrs. Colleton is fortunate in giving her confidence to a person of high honor and integrity, who does every justice to the estate, and the proprietor. At the Colleton plantation we had an opportunity of witnessing the mode of claying or (as they commonly term it) *improving* sugar. This is a very simple process by which the sugar is much whitened, and increased in value. A coating of clay, softened nearly to a liquid state with water, is spread over the surface of the sugar, as it stands in the deep earthen pots into which it is received from the boiler, and the fluid parts gradually draining away, the clay becomes hardened into a dry cake at the top ; while the water passes through the whole of the sugar, and carries with it a considerable portion of the melasses, through an opening at the bottom of the pot, leaving the sugar greatly whitened, and improved. The clay having become dry and contracted into a hard cake, is easily removed from the surface. We saw it lifted from several of the pots ; and

the difference between the sugar in these and in the pots which had not been subjected to the same process was very striking. After being thus improved the sugar sells at a price nearly one third higher, than in its raw state: other advantages are likewise said to derive to the planter from this partial mode of refining the produce of his canes. Soon after breakfast we resumed our morning wanderings, leaving the Colleton estate impressed with a strong sense of the kind reception, and the very warm hospitality it had afforded us. Upon taking leave, it was discovered that our party had decreased from eight to seven. The family and the house had sufficient attractions to detain the inclinations of us all; but the peculiar magnet which influenced the person, whose society we lost, was of an irresistible nature,—the junior Mr. H. was the happy suitor of Miss Hollingsworth, and, amidst the crowd of the evening, her attentions had necessarily been too much divided for him to have secured the exclusive proportion due to a faithful and devoted admirer.

After leaving Mr. Hollingsworth's, "Clarke's Court," and "Kendall" estates, were

the two first Plantations that arrested our attention. The latter is under the direction of a very singular and eccentric character, whose great ambition is to act differently from other men; and who finds a secret pleasure in deviating from all established and common rules. His mill is oddly trimmed, the sails strangely cut, and all the works, by some deviation or other, made peculiar. Among a multitude of other singularities he has planted a patch of pigeon peas in the neighbourhood of a field of canes, in order to allure the borers from the sugar,—a piece of policy very like setting a dish of tough beef before an alderman to seduce his appetite from a haunch of venison!

From Kendall's we rode to "Drax-Hall," the largest plantation of the island, and the property of the Grosvenor family. The house is a spacious old mansion, quite proportionate to the size of the estate, which we observed, from its great extent, had two mills, and a double set of works for the preparation of the sugar. This was also the case at the large estates of Colleton and Kendall.

No interruption,—no chafin occurs in the hospitality of Barbadoes ! It is universal and literally, as justly, entitles it to be ranked among the “ friendly isles.” In all the liberality of the country Mr. Chatterton of Drax-Hall, invited us to pass the day at the good old mansion, kindly profering us every friendly accommodation. But it was not consistent with our plan to take up our quarters at so early an hour ; we were therefore compelled to violate our inclinations, which would have detained us throughout the day at the Hall. After taking the refreshment of some wine and water, we pursued our ride, and passing by way of a wood, called after the name of the plantation “ Drax-Hall wood,” we proceeded to an estate called “ Spendlove,” which is under the care, and very excellent management of Mr. John Waith, a gentleman in no degree less friendly, or hospitable than any we had seen in the island, and although very active, no less fat and good humoured than some of our well fed priests, who feast upon the good things of England.

We find that fat persons are by no means uncommon in this island, notwith-

standing the great heat of climate, and the excessive waste of fluids by perspiration ; nor can this be at all wonderful to those who have witnessed their hearty devotion to the good things of the table. Spendlove was our place of dinner, and, while this was preparing, we begged permission to see the negro-yard, and to extend our visit into some of the huts, being desirous to inspect the habitations, and witness the mode of life of the slaves. It was remarked to us that the negroes were tenacious of their home, and disliked to have their huts exposed to the prying eye of strangers. We accordingly treasured the intimation, promising not to be too minute, but to regulate our curiosity with all becoming decorum, paying due regard to the feelings and prejudices of the sable inhabitants : and I should have been truly mortified not to have had this opportunity of telling you, from the testimony both of my eyes and ears, the very comfortable, and, I might say, happy state in which we found the slaves of Spendlove.

In your future good wishes for the comfort of the poor Africans forget not to pray that all masters may possess hearts as kind,

and humane, as that which beats in the bosom of "Jack Waith," this being the title by which that gentleman is best known in the island. The kind indulgence of the master is amply repaid in the attachment of his slaves; and the history of Mr. Waith and his gang, may stand in everlasting reproach to the self-arrogating opinion which maintains that negroes know not the divine sentiment of gratitude, but are most treacherous toward the master who best treats, and most indulges them. Were this the fact, as is not unfrequently asserted, it would offer itself in direct opposition to one great principle of human nature, and would place the blacks very far indeed below the whites, but, however much individual instances might seem to countenance the opinion, these, perhaps, do not occur more frequently among Africans, than among Europeans, and surely cannot be considered to arise more from any defect of a great and amiable principle of nature in them, than we should be willing to admit that they do in ourselves. Such instances are but the effect of depravity in either, and proceed from a *perversion*, not from a genuine *principle* of nature, and hence cannot in the one, more

than in the other, serve to establish any general maxim.

By kind attentions, by occasional and friendly indulgences towards his slaves, Mr. Waith had so meliorated their condition, so softened to them the hardships of slavery, and so improved their comforts, as to attach them to his person and his interest by the secure ties of affection and gratitude. The loud clang of the whip was seldom heard among them, and the smartings of its painful lash were scarcely dreaded ; for a better principle than fear impelled them to their duty. Their friendship for their master made his interest their own ; and their gratitude, towards him, rendered his safety the object of their solicitude, and even of their lives. Of this he had, in two great instances, known the most unequivocal proof,—one when the negroes of the estates had formed a conspiracy to rise upon their masters,—the other upon an alarm being given that the island was attacked by the French ! On both these occasions the slaves of Spendlove had voluntarily offered to lay down their lives in defence of Mr. Waith and his house.

At the negro yards it is common for the slaves to plant fruits and vegetables, and to raise stock. Some of them keep a pig, some a goat, some Guinea fowls, ducks, chickens, pigeons, or the like ; and at one of the huts of Spendlove, we saw a pig, a goat, a young kid, some pigeons, and some chickens, all the property of an individual slave.—This is mere indulgence, but it gratifies and amuses the negroes, and becomes, in various ways, highly useful. The little garden, and their flock, not only afford them occupation and amusement for their leisure moments, but create a degree of interest in the spot, and excite feelings of attachment toward the master, who both grants and protects the indulgence. The negro-yard, viewed from a short distance, forms an object of highly interesting and picturesque scenery ;—it comprizes all the little huts, intermixed with, and more or less concealed by the variety of shrubs and fruit trees, which kindly lend their shade ; likewise the many small patches of garden ground around them, and the different species of stock, some appearing in pens, some tied by the leg, or the neck, and some running at large ; and if it be evening, you have also the

crowd of negroes, male and female, as they chance to be seen, at rest, or moving in busy occupation, some passing from hut to hut, some dancing to their favorite music, some sitting at the door with the pipe in their mouths, and others smoking their loved sagar under the broad leaf of the plantain. The picture is also further enlivened by the groups of little black children;—some running and skipping about, some seated, playing before the doors, in Nature's ebon dress, and some, unable to walk, attempting little pedestrian excursions upon their hands and feet. Perhaps within so small a space, few scenes could offer so much to interest a contemplative mind; or to aid the pencil of a painter of the picturesque.

Independent of their own provisions, either raised or purchased, each negro has his weekly allowance issued to him, every Sunday, from the estate; and hence they are at liberty to take the whole of their own private stock to market, and to procure whatever additional comforts they prefer with the money it produces; and perhaps it will seem strange to you when I tell you that the markets of

the island depend almost wholly upon this mode of supply. They are all held weekly, and upon the Sunday; that being the day when the negroes are free from labour, and have leisure to attend.

Mr. Waith has learned the happy art of governing the slaves with kindness, and he finds it a better steward than the whip. With great goodness of heart he indulges his own humane feelings, and finds it better policy than using stripes. He is a man of social manners, and would certainly deceive Lavater himself, if he possessed not all the generosity and benevolence for which he has obtained such universal credit; for so plainly is all this written upon his brow, that those who run may read it.—He is of a ruddy complexion, and, with an uncommon degree of fatness, is very active, and appears to have all the strong health of an European. Never was entertainment more bountiful, or given with greater liberality, or a more cordial welcome, than at the plantation of Spendlove. Punch and mandram preceded the dinner; at table was an extensive variety of good things; and after the cloth was removed, the board

was spread with fruits of various kinds, together with claret, port, and madeira wines, and Goava-punch.

The round of feasting having continued for several hours, it was followed, like our dinner at the Bay-House, by new provocatives ; and the appetite, having already consumed more than it required, was invited to take more than it ought, by the unexpected appearance of smoking sprats, hot lobsters, and a large bowl of milk punch.

The cloth was again regularly spread, at a side table, and these things placed by us, as if we had just arrived from a journey with all the cravings of hunger ; and to my astonishment, I confess, some of the party left the fruit and wine, and seating themselves in due form at the other table, exhibited a renewal of appetite, as if the dinner they had just taken had been already digested and forgotten.

Mr. Waith's father and brother came from their different plantations to meet us at Spendlove, and were of the party at dinner. The old gentleman is an uncommonly

handsome man, sixty years of age, with all the health and spirits of a person of forty. He is not so fat as his son, *mais très enbon-point*. He is jocular and lively, a facetious companion, highly convivial, and, in the full spirit of the West Indies, a perfect *bon vivant*. He entreated us, with much kindness and urgent solicitation, to make a visit to his estate before we leave Barbadoes, apologizing in his own mirthful way, for not having it in his power to offer us more than a “plain farmer’s dinner,—a pig, a duck, and a turkey cock.”

In order to reach Bridge-Town in time to go on board to sleep, we left Spendlove earlier than our inclinations would have dictated. On our way we called at the house of Mr. Ellcock, brother to an eminent physician of that name, whom we had met at Dr. Hinde’s. We were led to the house through an avenue of the stately mountain cabbage trees, which are so peculiarly calculated to form a grand and imposing approach to any gentleman’s dwelling. These were the finest which had yet occurred to our observation, not excepting those we had seen at the college. Mr. Ellcock’s is the most modern, and most European-look-

inhabode we met with in the whole of our tour. The house and little flower garden before it resemble those of England, and near to the door is a cool avenue forming an agreeable promenade, deeply shaded with the foliage of a very handsome tree called the "Evergreen."

We walked into the small garden before the house, which is laid out *à l'angloise*, and has much more correctly the appearance of an English garden, than the many very humble imitations, which Englishmen are so often invited to see in France, Germany, and other parts of the continent, under the title of "Jardin Anglois."

Mr. Elcock's favorite pursuit is botany. He is occupied in obtaining an extensive collection of rare and curious plants, and of the different species of tropical trees, and fruits. He is particularly curious in his orchard; but unfortunately he was from home, and the key was not to be found, hence we lost the opportunity of seeing perhaps the most varied, and valuable assemblage of fruit trees in the island. Nor could we even reach

one look at the collection, through any opening, for the gate was close as the door of a convent, and the whole orchard was surrounded with a high hedge of the *lignum vitæ*, so thick and impenetrable as to resist even the prying eye of curiosity.

Both the orchard and garden were originally planned, and have been wholly planted under the immediate inspection of Mr. Ellcock, to whose taste and industry every credit is due for the improvements made, and the very valuable collection already brought together. He is a scientific botanist; and, from learning the attention he devotes to his plants and trees, and to the vegetable world in general, we could not but contemplate, in strong sympathy, the severe loss he must have felt in the unhappy fate of the learned naturalist of "Joe's River." In a small and remote island such a loss becomes, in many points of view, irreparable, it being unlike Europe, where from science being more advanced and more generally diffused, so many may be found of congenial minds, that the loss of one of Flora's favorite sons might not be equally irremediable. I have

not heard that it was so, but reason and sympathy would seem to imply it, and you, I know, will feel with me, that from circumstances of locality, and from similarity of sentiment and occupation, M. Ellecock and Mr. H— must have been more than brothers in regard and esteem, and that, to either, the loss of the other must have been of multiplied severity.

Although disappointed in this visit, we have still an eye to the collection of Mr. Ellecock, and do not intend to let it escape without inspection; for should it happen that we may be called away, before we have an opportunity of returning to it ourselves, we have made known its situation to a friend of ours, whose industry and acuteness in the science of botany will not allow a twig or a flower to pass unnoticed. Our colleague, Dr. Wright, is told where to find it, and as he is of the Charibbee Island staff, and may remain longer here than ourselves, or may possibly be stationed in the island, it will be a great delight, and perhaps the highest gratification that could offer to him, to explore this tropical vegetable depot. The Doctor is a veteran in the field of Flora, and in him Mr.

Ellcock may find a valuable substitute for the late unhappy possessor of "Joe's River."

Zealous and well versed as our friend is in the realms of botany, and particularly from having already augmented his fame by his industrious researches respecting the botanical productions of Jamaica; to range amidst such a collection of tropical plants, would form the delight of his leisure, and, from his accurate knowledge in the science, the whole botanical world might perhaps be benefited by it. To Mr. Ellcock, I trust it is also a pleasure in store, for he could not but find pleasure in being known to our friend, whose reputation as a botanist, is only rivalled by his philanthropy, and his amiable character as a man.

Disappointed in our visit at Mr. Ellcock's we rode on to Bridge-Town without further delay, and arrived in time to go off to the Lord Sheffield before the prohibited hour of nine, after which no boats are permitted to leave the shore.

To bring into one point the sum of gratification afforded by this delightful excursion,

would be a work of difficulty. You will form some idea of it from the loose details I have marked. It has offered us an abundant opportunity of seeing the whole face of the island; of viewing many of the different plantations; of observing the produce and mode of cultivation; of witnessing the manners and customs of the inhabitants; and of noticing the labors and mode of life of the slaves;—whom we have seen in the fields,—in their huts,—in the sugar works,—about the houses,—at their moments of rest and retirement, and amidst all their various occupations and modes of employment.

LETTER XXVIII.

Still no tidings of the commander in chief, or the convoy. A trading ship arrives from Glasgow. Anxiety displayed when any vessel enters Carlisle Bay. Privateers captured. A detachment of troops sent to Grenada. Uncertainty of all expeditions by sea. Black corps formed at Barbadoes. Negroes of the French colonies betray all the levity and vivacity of the French character. Dry season at Barbadoes. Heat of the climate. Suggestion that it might be politic to send out the hospitals, barracks, and other buildings, previous to the sailing of the troops. Hospitals erected at St. Anne's hill. Troops in the transports unhealthy. Moon-light view of a coco-nut grove, near Bridge-Town.

Carlisle Bay, Feb. 29. 1796

IT proves that we might have lengthened our Marooning excursion, without any interruption from the fear of being hurried away to St. Domingo. Scarcely any vessels arrived in the bay during our absence, and very few have come in since our return. Our solicitude, concerning the commander in chief and the convoy, is still undiminished. One ship left them in one latitude, another in another, one

parted from the fleet in the bay of Biscay, another off Portugal, a third off the coast of Africa, and others in different latitudes. Some suppose the convoy to have put into Lisbon, some say Gibraltar, and others various other ports. All is still enveloped in a cloud of uncertainty ; nor are we without our suspicions that the fleet may yet be nearer to you than it is to Barbadoes, and, indeed, this would seem probable from the extraordinary delay of the packets, not one having arrived since we came into harbour. Amidst all our apprehensions we still hope, and still, in daily expectation, look for their arrival.

One vessel has at length reached Barbadoes, which sailed subsequent to ourselves. It is a Glasgow trader, and although from a remote port, you will judge what multitudes thronged on board, as soon as she entered the harbour, to ask for news. She brings papers of January, and we are much gratified to learn that the admiral had written to England, so late as the fourth of that month, saying that he had, then, with him one hundred and eleven sail ; but we are sorry to find that a part of the convoy had been again compelled to put back, and we read,

with trembling apprehension, that fifteen vessels were known to have been dismasted, or otherwise disabled—all of which, it is to be feared, may not have reached even a safe port at home. Later than this date, the papers contain no news of the convoy : nor have we any through any other channel.

At this very interesting period of suspense, if a strange vessel enters the bay, the whole harbour becomes a crowded and moving scene, in consequence of almost every ship sending off a boat to seek tidings of the fleet. You, who can feel for our solicitude, will compassionate our disappointment, when we happen to find that the stranger is not direct from England. This frequently occurs, and we return loaded with chagrin. Of two ships which have been this day thronged with eager visitors, one proved to be from Newfoundland with fish, and the other from the coast of Africa with slaves—consequently neither of them knew so much of England or the convoy as ourselves.

News has just reached Barbadoes that some of our frigates have captured several priva-

teers off Trinidad. This is peculiarly important at the present moment, as multitudes of our defenceless transports are scattered over these seas, in search of which hosts of armed cruisers have been fitted out by the enemy.

I am sorry to tell you that information of an unpleasant nature has reached us from Grenada, in consequence of which it has been deemed expedient to embark a body of troops on board the Expedition *armée en flute*, and other smaller vessels, to send to the relief of that island, without waiting for the arrival of the commander in chief.

Could it have been foreseen, that the remainder of the convoy would have been detained so many weeks behind us, the troops which have been accumulated at Barbadoes might have been beneficially employed in restoring tranquillity to our disordered islands, and, perhaps, have been still in time to have joined in the great, and more combined object of the expedition. But it is not given to human ~~nature~~ ^{nature} to foresee events, and the sad disasters of this formidable armament only tend

to prove the extreme uncertainty which must ever attend our expeditions. The plan may be concerted with wisdom ; all the necessaries amply provided ; and the force, on sailing, fully adequate to the intended purposes : yet, after all, the lamentable uncertainty of the elements will often frustrate the best and wisest arrangements. If an army be destined to march, by land, to any given spot, it may be calculated, with considerable accuracy, in what number, and at what period it shall arrive ; and, with still greater certainty, any given quantity of stores and provisions may be transported with it : but no such accuracy can be attained where the high-road is the sea, and the trackless path to be traced by the capricious and inconstant winds.

We have an encampment of negroes formed near to Bridge-Town, upon a spot called Constitution-hill. They are a fine body of men, who have been enlisted from the revolted French islands, or brought away on the evacuation of them by our troops. They are active and expert, and are training into a formidable corps to assist in our intended expeditions. About sixteen hundred of them

bear arms ; besides whom there are twelve hundred to be employed as pioneers. They have all the vivacity and levity of the French character about them ; and it, occasionally, affords us amusement to observe the Barbadoes negroes regard them with evident amazement, gaping with wonder at their volatility and alertness. John Bull differs not more widely from a Parisian *petit-maitre* than many of the Barbadoes slaves from the *sable fops* of this sprightly corps.

It is now the dry season of the year at Barbadoes, and if you have imbibed the same idea of a tropical climate which I remember to have once felt, you will learn, with surprise, that very few days have passed, since our arrival, without a refreshing shower of rain. The heat is far more supportable than we had expected. The thermometer, at noon, is commonly about 80, and very seldom exceeds 82 ; we have not yet seen it above 84.

It happens, fortunately, that some of the ships, laden with the temporary hospitals, made in England, have arrived in Carlisle Bay, and, likewise, a few of the men belonging to

the corps of artificers; who, together with some creole and negro carpenters, are actively employed in fitting and putting up these frames with all possible expedition: but much of hurry and difficulty might have been avoided had the hospitals, the barracks, and other buildings been sent out in time to have been erected before any of the troops, or any division of the moving part of the expedition arrived.

The confusion that must necessarily arise from the arrival of the soldiers, of the buildings requiring to be erected, and of all the various departments, at the same moment, must be self-evident; and it will readily appear, from the hurried and numerous claims each department will have upon the artificers, that many of the requisites attaching to the hospitals may not be completed, before the more pressing occasion for them has ceased, on account of the removal of the troops to distant stations. Present experience may convey an useful lesson.

From the great exertions now making we hope very soon to have hospital room at St. Anne's Hill for, at least, a thousand sick, and I

am sorry to remark, from the unhealthy state in which some of the transports have already arrived, that it seems likely we may have occasion for it all ; but we have the further accommodation of hospital ships, should they be required, and have, therefore, the prospect of seeing all the sick comfortably placed, and amply provided with such necessaries as their unfortunate state may demand. This, to a medical officer, is a circumstance of no trivial import. To the service it is likewise essential : but, speaking as an individual, I know of few things that could be so truly distressing to a man of feeling and humanity, as to behold a crowd of brave and suffering soldiers lying destitute of the comforts and accommodations required in sickness ; and you will believe that I have very sincere gratification in finding that I am not likely to be exposed to this painful necessity.

In a moon-light walk from St. Anne's hill to Bridge-Town, after our visit at the hospital, our attention was lately very powerfully arrested by the striking appearance of a gently waving grove of coco nut trees, at the side of the road. From the brightness of the

moon, the peculiar form of the trees, and the dead stillness of the night, we were suddenly struck with the grandeur and solemnity of the scene ; nor do I know that my eye was ever attracted to one so divinely soft and sepulchral. On beholding it, I was fixed in pensive contemplation. The trees grew high, one to another, and the naked trunks formed so many stately pillars, supporting their palmated summits, which, stretching to meet each other, assumed the semblance of extensive aisles of Gothic arches. The whispering breeze gently waved the leaves in soothing undulation, while the deep and dark shading foliage shut out the silver moon-beams, leaving only an occasional solitary ray, to steal in here and there, at partial openings, to increase the interest and relieve the plaintive gloom. A contemplative mind could not fail to be enamoured with the soft melancholy of the scene. It produced a kind of solemn, and tender enchantment ; the effect of which was highly increased from the broad sea appearing below the grove, whose waters, in all the stillness of night, bearing the trembling beams of the moon upon their surface, moved in gentle murmurs to the shore, and broke in whif-

pers, scarcely to be heard, upon the sands. Never was spot more calculated to fill the mind with sublime and tender impressions ! It seemed the fit abode of silence, and of sleep—a sacred shade where the child of sorrow might sweetly indulge his grief, listen to the sympathetic rustlings that whispered to his sighs, and pour forth, in reflection and penitence, the genuine effusions of the heart :

“ What solemn solitude around !
 Here Nature’s true sublime is found :
 Hence thought should travel to the sky.”

It was a pensive and sequestered retirement, where a sorrowing and heart-rended lover might indulge a full feast of soul, in offering his devotions at the tomb of a lost mistress : for, amidst such scenes, the mind springs from its mansion of clay, to range in plaintive cogitation and delight : it feasts in rapturous melancholy, and, dwelling in solemn thought, is elevated above itself. Filled with sublime contemplation, the spirit is unmindful of its earthly chains, and the soul, absorbed in greatness, soars to its peaceful and heavenly mansion above.

LETTER XXIX.

Author claims the freedom of "noting" upon all subjects. Polite and learned practitioners in medicine at Barbadoes. The contrary. Anecdote of a Barbadoes medicaster. Remarks upon the fatal consequences of allowing every pretender to range at large in the medical profession. Empirics and patents. New Tavern at Bridge-Town. Mode of separating the seeds from cotton. Barbadoes method of carrying children. Suggestion whether it may not be preferable to the English method. A specimen of the bitter hardships of slavery.

Barbadoes, March.

It being stipulated that all subjects of remark are to find place in my *Notes*, you will not reproach me with the dissentient term "Parish business," if an occasional sentence should chance to steal in upon the topic of medicine. Indeed you have desired it should be so, and this, at once, prevents the necessity of apology.

You will have collected, from what I have said before, that there are Gentlemen in the

medical profession in Barbadoes, who are, equally, an honor to their profession, and an ornament to society, and I may here repeat that many such are to be met with in the island. But it is an unhappy truth that there are others who are only pre-eminent in ignorance, for, alas ! practitioners in medicine may be found in this island, who, in learning and manners, are not far removed above the slaves. They are more illiterate than you can believe, and the very *negro doctors* of the estates too justly vie with them in medical knowledge. It has happened to us to see, among them, men, who instead of having the care of the health and lives of their fellow-subjects, ought not to be entrusted to compound a pill, or a bolus. A tyro, advanced only a year or two in his apprenticeship, in England, is far better instructed in his profession, than some of the soi-disans and practising *proficients* of Barbadoes. Totally unprepared with a classical education, and, indeed, wholly devoid of the very rudiments of literature, they indolently waste a few years, in the house, or idly looking out at the shop-window of some uneducated apothecary of the island, and then in all the bold confidence of ignorance,

they commence *Doctors*, feeling themselves fully qualified, without professional reading, without visiting the schools of Europe, without experience, and I might say, without thought, or judgment, to undertake the cure of all the direful maladies which afflict the human frame ; —in short, without one necessary qualification do these creole *pretenders* feel themselves competent to exercise all the various branches of the healing art.

Cleghorn, Master, and myself called, lately, at the shop of one of the practitioners of this class, to purchase some Peruvian bark, when we found our *brother doctor* disposed to be facetious and communicative ; and prone to talk with equal confidence and loquacity. His bark, he assured us, was “ of the best,” for he had plenty of the “ Cort. Peruv. *optimum*, and had “ advertised it *for sale*,” although he “ never used it for his *patients* ;” — adding to this very liberal and laudable avowal “ I have “ also the Cort. Peruv. *common*, but I never write now for the Cort. Peruv. *second* : formerly I did, and the druggists cheated me, but I have found them out, and now make the Cort. Peruv. *second* myself. I mix a little of

the Cort. Peruv. *optimum*, with the Cort. Peruv. *common*, and so make Cort. Peruv. *second*, * and in this way gain the money myself which, before, I foolishly paid to the druggists in England."

This man who, independent of a total want of professional knowledge, avowedly, and from the most sordid motives, never administered to his patients a single grain of that bark, which (even in proper cases for its exhibition) was most likely to prove beneficial,—*this man* is a busy practitioner in Bridge-Town, and is esteemed the great Hippocrates, the family *doctor*, and the confidential, and prime guardian of health to many of the inhabitants of Barbadoes !

In all climates, a sound judgment, and an acuteness of discrimination, together with a correct knowledge of the human frame, are necessary to the successful treatment of diseases : but in the West Indies, where the attack

* It were much to be wished, that the vendors of drugs had not discovered a still worse means of adulterating this most valuable medicine.

is frequently sudden, and the progress destructively rapid, if the malady be neglected or badly treated, in its incipient stage, medicine becomes inefficient, and, too often, the disease cannot be subdued by all the art of the wisest Physician.—How lamentable, then, is it that such ignorant medicasters as our “*Cort Peruv. optimum*” should be entrusted, and particularly in a tropical region, with the health and lives of multitudes of their fellow-beings.

When we reflect that the riches and prosperity of a country connect, most intimately, with its population, and that the lives of men are of the highest importance to the state, it becomes matter of surprise and astonishment, that, even in the remotest colony, such pretenders should be permitted to disgrace the healing art. If that wise principle “*salus populi suprema lex,*” be correct, and I suspect it cannot be disputed, the health of the people must be a subject of prime consideration in the eye of every government;—how then are we to account for the apathy which permits such dangerous *doctors* to wield the destructive lance, or, how shall we explain the miscalculating policy which not only tolerates a tre-

immense host of empirics, but suffers them to overrun every part of the state, under the all-creating sanction of *a patent*, or allows them, on the bare privilege of bold assurance, to commit depredations upon the health, the purses, and *the lives* of His Majesty's subjects?

You will recollect the name of "*Betsy Lemon*" the respectable mulatto whom I formerly mentioned to you as the leading support of *the Bar* at Mary Bella Green's, and you will be pleased to learn that she is released from the toils of slavery, and placed in a more independent situation, where she may become established as an useful and respectable member of the community. She has opened a new tavern at Bridge-Town, where we have made a party of encouragement, to take a dinner, and drink to the success of the hostess; and, from the accommodations we met with, I may add, that, should any more of your friends follow us to Barbadoes, you may assure them of attention and good treatment at the house of *Betsy Lemon*.

In one of our late walks, near Bridge-Town, we met with two small windmills,

erected for the purpose of clearing the cotton from its seeds ; and, as they happened to be in motion we availed ourselves of the opportunity of waiting a short time, to witness the process: The cotton, when pulled from the pod, envelopes the seeds, forming the matrix in which they grow and are embedded ; and it is separated from them by being caused to pass through the bite of two small metallic rollers, placed horizontally, one over the other, and turned by the action of the mill. These passing round, near to each other, are fed with the cotton, which they take in, without receiving the seeds, leaving them to fall to the ground, or into a basket below, while the cotton, drawn between the rollers, passes through and is ejected into a box on the opposite side. The process is so entirely simple that it might be performed equally well by a smaller instrument worked with the hand, or the foot, and which we are told is the method practised in many parts of the West Indies.

Among the novelties which meet the eye of an European upon his arrival at Barbadoes, or probably in any of the West India islands, is the practice of carrying the children across

the hip, instead of seating them upon the arm. The lower class of white women, in Barbadoes, have adopted this custom, from the example of the negroes, among whom it seems to be the universal mode of nursing; and, perhaps, it would admit of argument, whether this method be not preferable to the European custom of carrying them upon the arm. Seated upon the hip, the infant soon learns to cling, and in a great measure to support itself; but, placed upon the arm, it must always remain a helpless or dead weight upon the mother, being without the power of assisting itself, or relieving its position. Further, it is so conveniently placed when upon the hip, that the mother can support it with much greater facility, for by only putting the arm behind it, the child can lie back, or rest and change its posture in various ways: thus the weight becomes less fatiguing to the mother, and perhaps less injurious to the infant; for, at this tender age, the long bones of the thigh, not being firmly ossified, are liable to yield, and a degree of deformity may be induced, from their being made to bear the whole weight of the body, at long and frequent periods, upon so narrow a seat as the arm.

Trivial as this subject might appear to some, it is worthy the serious consideration of British mothers, and nurses. A deformed negro is a very rare object, and this may probably be attributed, in great measure, to the manner of nursing them in their infancy; for, besides the better mode of carrying them, they have the further advantage of being allowed to crawl about upon their hands and feet, in perfect freedom, unrestrained by ligatures, or tight garments.

Although I have observed the mode of carrying children upon the hip to be the common method of nursing among the slaves, yet, when they have to carry them to a great distance, they neither place them upon the hip, nor the arm, but upon the back; and I have, frequently, been surprized to observe by what slight support they secure them in this situation. A mere pocket handkerchief, tied carelessly round the mother, often forms all their seat, and all their safety!

A few evenings ago I had the afflicting opportunity of witnessing a scene of cruelty, which strongly exemplified the abject, and wretched-

ly humiliating condition to which human beings are subjected in a life of slavery. I happened to be waiting upon the quay for the Lord Sheffield's boat, in order to return on board, when two men, apparently white creoles, came up, and seized a negro, who was standing near me, accusing him of having run away from his master. The poor black assured them that he had no master,—that he belonged to Mrs. —, that he was well known in the town,—and that they must, certainly, have mistaken his person; and, upon these grounds, urged the impropriety of their taking him to prison. But, regardless of his remonstrances, and of their own error, they tied him with a heavy cord, fastened his hands, and forced him towards the place of confinement! Curiosity led me to follow them. The poor man still pleaded his innocence, and the mistake they had committed, begging and praying to be allowed to refer them to his Mistress, or to another family in the town, to identify his person. Heedless of his protestations and entreaties they still dragged him on, and from his only expressing a reluctance at being thus, unjustly, hurried to a prison, one of these hardened wretches struck him a violent blow

on the head, with a large stick, calling out to the other, in broad Barbadoes accent, "Daa-am him, cut him down."

A little before they reached the prison they had to pass a door-way where there happened to be a strong light, by means of which one of these cruel instruments of the law of *force* instantly recognised the poor ill-treated slave, and finding that they were actually guilty of the mistake which the negro had stated, he called out to his savage comrade, who had struck the helpless black upon the head, "Daa-am him, I know the fellow, we must let him go," upon which, they both, with horrid and dreadful imprecations, ordered him to stand, *without stirring*, while they should untie him; and, upon his only moving his arm to expedite the loosening of the cord, they swore, that if he dared "to stir, or look savage," they would "cut him down," or put him, "directly into prison." Such was the compensation dealt him for the unjust and cruel treatment he had already received. The wretches not only dragged the poor unoffending slave to a prison, in defiance of his solemn assurances of their having mistaken his person,

and without allowing him an appeal to any one who knew him, but, because he ventured to say they were committing an error, had the inhumanity to strike him with a force sufficient to have fractured his skull, and to threaten him with the further severity of death, or a dungeon, should he dare to express only a *look* of displeasure.

What must have been the feelings of this injured man? who, after being abused and mal-treated, was further put in fear of his life, should he only permit nature to assume her seat on his brow,—should the cruelty, pain, and injustice he had suffered, only cause a mark of disapprobation to appear upon his countenance! But Nature, however proscribed, was not to be restrained by such command! While the power of memory remains to me I can never—*never* forget the indignant, but hopeless expression of injury which overspread the features of this poor slave, as he retired!—He felt aggrieved, and was conscious that he had no remedy,—no appeal!

LETTER XXX.

Author sends his friend a list of the ships of the convoy which had reached Barbadoes. A vessel from Liverpool arrives in Carlisle Bay. The body of the fleet still wandering upon the ocean. Pocket still delayed. Cork division found to be at Cove long after it was reported at sea. Probability of the author and his comrades being employed, in consequence of the increasing number of sick. Carlisle-Bay disturbed by Press-gangs. Confusion created by the sailors of one of the transports resisting them. The Lord Sheffield visited by two gangs in one night.

Barbadoes March 9.

IT occurs to me that, amidst all the uncertainties of our unfortunate fleet, it may be pleasant to you and others of our friends to know which of the ships have made good the passage, I, therefore, send you the annexed list of upwards of sixty, which are now safe at anchor in Carlisle Bay.

A vessel from Liverpool is come into harbour, which sailed on the 9th of January,

but we are still without any late news of the fleet, which sailed on the 9th of December; and, singular to tell, the Liverpool ship, now arrived, made the whole passage without happening to fall in with any one of the convoy. We learn that, previous to her sailing from port, the Admiral had again written to England, mentioning that ninety sail still remained with him, at the date of his letter; but that, from the repeated gales they had met with, he feared the others had been obliged to put back disabled. It would seem, from this, that he has no idea of so considerable a number having reached Barbadoes. We, who are here, observing on the other hand that very heavy and bad-sailing vessels have made their passage, are surprized what can so long have detained the remainder of the convoy; and what can be the cause why we are so long without any direct and accurate intelligence of its situation. It is now thirteen weeks since the fleet left England, and we know about as much concerning the great body of it, at this moment, as if it were sailing in the moon.

We are sadly anxious for the arrival of a packet, and of newspapers, neither the ship from Glasgow, nor that from Liverpool having brought more than one or two papers of the few days preceding their departure. We look for them in series, and expect quite a feast of delight from the perusal. Debarred from the news of our own country, and the old world, we have occasionally been much gratified by reading the American papers, brought by vessels which have arrived with stores and provisions from the United States.

We, who are destined to proceed to St. Domingo, have new disappointment in finding that the Cork division, intended for that island, had not sailed at a date many weeks subsequent to the time it had been reported at sea; and hence we feel it probable that we may even yet be long delayed: nor does it seem unlikely, that, before we depart, we may be called on duty at Barbadoes, in consequence of the increasing number of sick, and the non-arrival of the medical officers of the Charibbee-Island; or what, with strange incorrectness, has been called the Leeward-Island staff.

You will, perhaps, be surprised to know that the transports in Carlisle bay have been several times interrupted, and the whole harbour disturbed, and brought into a state of confusion, by the visitings of different press-gangs, in the exercise of that necessary custom, so repugnant to the feelings, and the freedom of Englishmen.

In one instance an alarming scene took place in consequence of the sailors of one of the ships resisting this arbitrary and unconstitutional method of obtaining their services. They opposed the boarding, and beat off the agent, and two boats with the press-gang. This resistance was soon followed by the appearance of a party of soldiers, with firelocks and fixed bayonets, who had been called upon to aid the press-gang, and to force the sailors to submission. Upon seeing the troops approach, thus formidably armed, the sailors jumped into the ship's boat, and made the best of their way towards the shore. The press-gang and two or three boats, filled with armed soldiers, pursued them. A general sensation of alarm overspread the harbour, and it was feared that much blood would be shed. Every

vessel was thronged with spectators, an universal impulse was excited, and feelings of anxiety seemed to possess every mind. The sailors manœuvred best in the race. They gained headway at every pull of their oars, and made the shore at a point beyond the reach of the soldiers and their musquets. Several shots were fired at them in vain; and upon their landing, a loud and general shout instantly spread around; which seemed to be involuntary, but was strongly expressive of the wish of the multitude that the sailors might escape. Their only hope was in flight, and some of them had the good fortune to elude the activity and vigilance of their pursuers; but the soldiers proved to be more successful in the chase, on shore, than they had been in the boats, for a party of the sailors was brought back a short time after, under a strong guard, and compelled to submit to this law of force.

It has been our fortune on board the Lord Sheffield to be disturbed by two different parties of the press-gang in the course of the same night: one of which came alongside at midnight,—the other at two o'clock in the morning. From stealing upon us unexpected-

ly, and in the dark, you will suppose that much hurry and confusion was created. Being wakened by the noise and running of people over my head, I put on my *robe de chambre*, and went up to learn the cause, when, finding it to be the press-gang, I felt a strong disposition to observe their conduct and manner of proceeding, and therefore remained upon deck, during the whole time they continued on board.

A Lieutenant of the navy was stalking up and down with a huge drawn sabre in his hand, calling out, with boatswain's lungs, for the steward to bring up a light. His men were running about every part of the ship armed with cutlasses, pistols, hangers, and various other weapons, and instruments of death. Such of the sailors of the ship whom they found upon deck, were instantly tumbled into a boat at the side, filled with armed men. The others secreted themselves in holes and corners, while the old steward with seeming haste, but with fox-like cunning, delayed the light. Perhaps you will say it was a little severe to demand a light, at all, from the ship, in order to rob her of her own men ; but the

whole proceeding was alike arbitrary and despotic, and this only consistent with the other parts of it. They had come in darkness, and with muffled oars, that they might take the vessel by surprise, and were unable to prosecute their search, into the remote and concealed parts of the ship, without the aid of light.

The steward, somewhat endangered from the ire he had provoked by his well-contrived delay, at length appeared with the lantern ; and a general search was immediately made below. The cabins,—the cable-tier,—the pantries,—the lockers—the very pig-sty,—every hole and corner they could think of were hunted out, and they seemed resolved that not a spot should be omitted. Yet, notwithstanding all their vigilance, several of the sailors contrived to elude the search. One, who had not time to escape to a place of more probable security, remained quietly in his hammock, and, when they came to examine it, affected to awake uttering a loud groan, strongly expressive of pain and suffering. Hearing this the press-gang asked who it was, and if a sailor. The mate, who was watching them with a vigilance not inferior to their own, immediately re-

plied that it was a sick man, who had been long confined to his birth. His promptitude was successful : sick men they did not want ; and the sailor was left undisturbed—his freedom the fruit of his well-timed stratagem, and of the expertness of the mate in promoting it.

The second party came more openly, and without observing the same skillness of approach, consequently all the sailors who were likely to suit them, were secreted before they could reach the deck ; and from the mate receiving them frankly, and assuring them that they were too late in their visit, in consequence of their comrades having but just preceded them, and taken away the greater part of the ship's company, they did not subject the vessel to so minute and prying a search, but, after looking generally round the ship, went quietly away without a man.

LETTER XXXI.

Senate house, and general assembly of Barbadoes. Punch and Santgaree a pleasant part of the debate. Altercation in the court of Chancery. Interesting party dine with the mess of the Lord Sheffield. Hazardous escape of two Englishmen from confinement. Honorable conduct of Victor Hugo's secretary. Remarks on bribery and corruption—on patriotism. Self-love, and the love of fame stronger incentives to action than love of country.

Barbadoes, March 15. 1796

I NOW take up my pen, to you after making a visit to the senate house, and being present at a sitting of the general assembly of the island. The proceedings were conducted according to the routine of our House of Commons, which the assembly regards as its model. The representatives, like ours, are returned from the provinces, two, not, indeed, from each county, but from each parish: and, there being eleven parishes in the island, the assembly, consequently, consists of twenty-two members.

As in our house, so in theirs, the person who presides is denominated—"the speaker"

—the *bearer* had perhaps been more correct, as he happens to be the only person who is precluded from speaking in the debate, and is appointed, for the express purpose of hearing all others, who, through him, address their arguments to the house.

Among the members we recognized several of the gentlemen whom we had seen in our marooning excursion into the country. It did not happen to be a sitting of great interest to strangers, there being but little before the house for discussion, and, consequently, few debates. Reading and passing a militia act, and some other bills, constituted nearly the whole business of the meeting. One part of the proceedings, however, we thought to be strictly in the - - - - *order of the day*. It was excessively warm, and we were sadly parching with thirst, when two persons suddenly appeared with a large bowl, and a two quart glass filled with punch and fangaree. These were presented to "Mr. Speaker" who, after dipping deep into the bowl, passed it among the members: nor was the audience forgotten, for we were most gratefully taught that the hospitality, so universal in the island, lives even in the senate. The glass was handed

up to us, and we found that it was correctly *in order* for strangers to join in this part of the debate. It came at a moment peculiarly opportune, and we drank deeply and cordially to our friends, and the house of assembly.

The court of Chancery, with the governor as president, was sitting in a chamber above, and, suddenly, a loud clamour, indicating discòrd and confusion, was heard from that quarter; we, therefore, left the house of assembly and ascended to the upper house, in the desire of ascertaining what could possibly have caused such turbulent proceedings; when we found this august assembly totally absorbed in a quarrel between two of its members, who had interrupted the business of the sitting, and diverted the attention of the house exclusively to their personal dispute. Each remained obstinately inflexible, with regard to the required acknowledgment, and neither could be brought to any terms of concession; hence, after a long interruption, it proved that the house had only to leave it to be settled as a personal quarrel, according to the feelings of the parties. Perhaps it had been more consistent had the court, from the first, main-

tained its own dignity, and not suffered its proceedings to have yielded to a personal altercation within its own walls, which, there, it might have prevented, but which between the individuals it had not the power to control. There appeared no prospect of a reconciliation between the parties, nor of the harmony of the court being sufficiently re-established for the business of the meeting to be resumed; we therefore left them, in order to pursue our further engagements.

You will be pleased to know that we have, lately, had a very interesting party to dine with us on board the *Lord Sheffield*; among whom were three gentlemen who had recently returned from imprisonment—one from France, the others from Guadeloupe. The narrative of their confinement and treatment, together with some anecdotes of persons whom they had about them, afforded us much amusement, and gave to their details a high degree of interest.

One of the gentlemen, who had been taken to Guadeloupe, was confined on board a

prison ship, with several others of our countrymen, where, being treated with great rigour, and fed with a very scanty allowance of bad food, he entered into a confidential agreement, with one of his fellow-prisoners, to concert some means of escape; and, one day, seeing a boat, convenient for their purpose, come to the ship, they stepped over the side of the vessel, and descending suddenly into it, as it lay alongside, immediately threw overboard three of the five negroes, who were in it, and compelled the other two to take up their oars, and assist in rowing them away.

The success of this perilous enterprise was equal to the boldness with which it was undertaken. The sentinels fired at them in vain: being once clear of the ship they pulled the oars with vigour, and, encouraging the blacks to their aid, were soon out of reach. Neither boats, nor bullets were able to overtake them: they were quickly at sea, in their open skiff, and, gladly, entrusted themselves to the mercy of the elements. The weather favored them, and they soon made a port of safety in a British island.

The manner in which the other gentleman who had been confined in Guadaloupe obtained his release was also attended with peculiar, and strongly marked circumstances. Having an opportunity of speaking with the secretary of Victor Hugues, he represented to him in strong colours the very serious personal injury his confinement might bring upon him, and urged the absolute impossibility of his release being injurious to any individual of the French nation, supporting his appeal with the offer of a sum nearly equal to 1200*l.* sterling, to be paid *au citoyen secretaire*, provided he would contribute his aid in obtaining him and two of his friends permission to leave the island. The secretary rejected the offer with disdain, expressing both anger and astonishment that he should dare to imagine that he was capable of being seduced by a bribe; adding that "formerly Frenchmen were venial and might be *bought*; but now, citizen, we are republicans! and a good republican requires not a bribe to encourage him to the execution of his duty, nor is capable of being, thereby, impelled to commit a breach of it." He, nevertheless, listened with attention to the pecu-

liar severity of the case, and having heard the particulars, appeared to feel a degree of interest regarding the hardships that were represented. Upon leaving the gentleman he said he would try to intercede in his behalf; and intimated a hope that he might be able in the course of a week to communicate some report to him. A few days only had elapsed when the secretary returned, bringing with him the prisoner's release, which he presented to him, with felicitations, expressing himself happy in being the means of his regaining his liberty, and, peremptorily, refusing to accept, even the slightest compliment for the service he had rendered him.

Would all men act thus, my friend, of how little consequence were it whether they were denominated republicans, aristocrats, or royalists! What the form of government, or who should rule the land; could be of little consequence, were honor and virtue made the rulers of men's actions. Speaking from the warm feelings of the heart a very elegant writer has said, "I cannot be more convinced of the truth of any demonstration in Euclid than I am that that system of politics

must be best by which those I love are made happy"—but, perhaps, it might be said, with still greater correctness, that *that system of government must be best, where virtue, among the people, most prevails.*

It is idle to declaim against a government, while individuals—while even *those who complain* have not virtue enough to withstand the seducing lures of corruption! Let the people be virtuous, and the government will never be corrupt. Were men to resist bribery, and to expose their seducers to public reproach, few attempts would be made upon their independence. But alas! even those who are loudest in railing against corruption, but too commonly, when the magic wand approaches *themselves* evince that it was not virtue raised their voices! Too often the disordered appetite, which calls aloud for the high condiments of privation and patriotism, feels no nausea from a change of diet, but finds all its acrid gnawings speedily appeased by a well-dressed dish of - - - - *loaves and fishes!*

Perhaps it may be doubted whether a true patriot, in the full extent of the term,

ever existed, that is, a man who could feel himself so devoutly and abstractedly a patriot as, wholly, to forego every personal consideration, and devote himself *exclusively* to his country. Individuals, in convention, may consent to give up a portion of their personal rights, for the general good, and for the superior advantages accruing to themselves, in society : but, perhaps, no man can love his country better than himself, or become so pure a patriot as to sacrifice his personal ease, his comfort, his happiness, and even his life, from a *fondness for the soil* whereon he was born.

Self-love would seem a more powerful and more essential principle of our nature than love of our country, and, without foregoing this great leading principle, a man may be a very good patriot.—They are in no degree incompatible, and, consistent with the duties he owes himself, a man may possess enough of patriotic virtue to call forth all the high duties demanded of him by his country.

The love of fame, as a branch of self-love, is a much stronger principle of action than patriotism, and may lead to acts, whence

the country is highly benefitted, and which from intimacy of connexion, when only superficially examined, may appear to arise from patriotism alone. Perhaps the greatest deeds of the most renowned patriots, whether of ancient or modern times, could the principle from which they were derived be fairly traced, or the secret motives which caused them be fully disclosed, would be found to have arisen, not barely from a patriotic feeling, but, in a still greater degree, from that powerful and infatuating passion—the love of fame. Could those modern great men, or those heroes of antiquity, who are said to have died for their country, have been fully made to believe that from the moment they ceased to breathe their names would never again be heard, or uttered—that their remembrance would at no future moment find place in the minds of their friends or descendants, or in the annals of their country; and that their deeds would be instantly forgotten, and blotted out in utter oblivion, it is more than probable they had never regarded all the good their country might derive from the sacrifice as an equivalent for the loss of life—and

that, consequently, those great acts (said to be) of patriotism had never been known.

It has been said that—"were there no uniform there would be no soldiers." However much this may be doubted, it will, perhaps, be less disputed, that if no personal honor or fame were to attach to those great deeds, which are said to arise from patriotism, few would die from an abstract love of country.

There is a happy something in our nature which leads all men to extol honorable and virtuous actions, and to deprecate such as are corrupt and vicious: however depraved himself, there is a certain upright conduct which, in others, even the most dissolute does and must approve! Every one, my friend, will esteem the conduct of the republican secretary, which has led me to fatigue you with these remarks. Alas! that every one would learn to imitate it! Then might these dire political contests cease; and then were it unimportant to Europe and the world whether France shall, finally, succeed in establishing a republican government, or grow weary of blood-stained faction and revert to a monarchy!

LETTER XXXII.

A packet arrives at Barbadoes. Carlisle Bay, and Bridge-Town one great scene of confusion. High feast of perusing the news-papers. The fleet so long expected at Barbadoes still in England. Season growing late for military operations. Report that honors are to be conferred on Admiral Christian for his great exertions in taking care of the convoy. Admiral Cornwallis expected in the West Indies. Hope of peace vanished. Austrian armies checked and defeated. Scarcity of corn and specie in England. Grenada in danger of being taken by the Brigands.—St. Vincent - - - by the Charibs. A French spy detected at Barbadoes.

Barbadoes, March 16.

WHAT a day of hurry, confusion, and solicitude! a packet has at length arrived! From December the 9th, to March the 16th, have we been separated from you without hearing one word of our friends, or scarcely of our country. How shall I convey to you any just idea of the scene this day has produced by the impatient multitude crowding in anxious eagerness to obtain letters, to see the papers, and to hear the news!

Early in the morning a signal appeared at the fort, implying that a vessel was in sight. Soon afterwards, this was lowered down, and the packet signal hoisted in its place ; when instead of the pleasing expectation of seeing a vessel of our fleet, and learning news of the convoy, all were on tiptoe in the still more lively hope of hearing news, not only of our unfortunate armada, but of Europe, of England, and our friends ! Concerning the fleet we had grown quite weary of conjecture, and now saw it probable that we might obtain more accurate intelligence respecting it, by way of England, than by any ship which had been separated from it upon the passage.

On the packet making the harbour it caused a crowd not unlike what you may have seen at a sailing or rowing match of boats upon the Thames. Each wishing to be first, and all being anxious to learn the news, the vessel was beset on every quarter before she could come to anchor, and the whole bay became one animated scene of crowded ships and moving boats. Many who could not go to the packet as she entered the harbour, repaired on shore to be ready, there, to meet the news.

The people of the town, also, thronged the beach in anxious multitudes. All was busy expectation. Impatience scarcely allowed the bags to reach the office : every avenue to which was so closely blockaded that the house was quite in a state of siege, and the post-master and his mansion in danger of being taken by storm.

It was about eleven o'clock when the inspector general, Dr. Master, and myself, following the common impulse, went to inquire for our letters and papers ; but we could only advance within sight of the post office walls,—to approach the door was utterly impossible. Finding the crowd to be still so deep, we rambled about the town, and made calls upon various persons in order to glean the news. We found that it was the first January packet, which had arrived, and hence it could not be expected to bring the regular papers later than to the 6th of that month, although it failed so late as the 9th of February, having been detained at Falmouth waiting for a favorable wind.

Seeing no prospect of ascertaining whether we had any letters, we returned from the hot and crowded town to take our dinners quietly on board, and to enjoy the high feast of reading the papers, which our obliging and attentive friend, Mr. Hinde, had kindly allowed us to put into our pockets. You will believe that this formed a most exquisite desert after our meal, and was of more grateful flavor than all the fruits and sweets of a tropical soil.

To an Englishman a news-paper is a never-failing source of amusement ; and the high delight thence derived appears to be, in some measure, peculiar to our nation. If, therefore, even at home, and in a peaceful hour, it be a great pleasure to take up the Times or the Chronicle of the morning, I put it to your feelings to judge what must have been our enjoyment, when I tell you that, at this wide distance from our country, and after being long shut in ignorance regarding it, we have been quietly seated in the shade of a cool cabin to peruse the papers in the regular series of a whole fortnight. We remained for several hours secluded and in silence,—

each fearing to speak lest he should disturb the others. In fancy I see you watching our party—catching each glance of the eye as it runs anxiously over every column—amusing yourself at the solemn stillness that obtains among us—and smiling at the sudden start and slight pause of interruption which occurs at the remotest corner of the last page, leading only to the delay of extending the arm for another paper. I see you contemplating the ideas passing in our minds, and marking the varied expression upon our countenances as we pass eagerly on from page to page! But all these feelings have been formerly your own; you will therefore know how to estimate them. Had you not been already a traveller I could have wished you a long voyage that you might know the real value of a Morning Herald, or an evening Star—that you might enjoy the high flavor of a true English feast, seasoned with absence! Send out our friend * * * * that he may be roused from the apathy which so distressfully encroaches upon his mechanical round of luxury and indulgence! Tell him that were he held in disappointed expectation, from day to day, through many anxious weeks,

he would find the amusements which he now partakes with indifference to be really exquisite : and assure him that the variety of occurrences, during a temporary privation, might divert him from a life of indolence and appalling pleasure, and convince him that many things he now disregards are capable of affording far more enjoyment, than the vapid time-killing routine of parading in Bond-Street,—treading upon muslin trains in the crowd of Kensington Gardens,—and lounging at the play and the opera, without hearing five words of the performance !

We find the uncertainty, regarding our convoy, removed by the news we read, but not so satisfactorily as we had hoped ; for we have the mortification to learn that the fleet, with which we sailed from Spithead on the 9th of December, and which, for so long past, we have anxiously and hourly expected, instead of being safe with us, at Barbadoes, is lying quietly at anchor with you, in England !

From the papers it is ascertained that the great body of the convoy, with our commander

in chief and the admiral, are returned to St. Helen's, after continuing seven tedious weeks at sea, beating against contrary winds and destructive storms, and that many of the ships, which had separated, had previously put back to Cork, Kinsale, Plymouth, and various other ports. This is very distressing and vexatious news, for it robs us of the pleasing hope with which we had daily looked out for our comrades, and tells us that all still remains - - - - to be done again ! Twice has this great expedition put to sea, and during many months has it been, daily, expected to arrive : yet after a long and vivid suspense do we now learn that it is still in an English harbour, only preparing to fail !

A voyage to the East Indies or to China might be performed in less time than seems to be required for this unhappy expedition to reach its destination. It was expected to fail so long since as the month of September, and actually did put to sea in November, and again on the 9th of December ; and its arrival has been anxiously looked for, by the people of the islands, more than half a year !

The season is rapidly advancing—the milder temperature of the climate, and the more favorable period of the year are wearing away, and the wet months fast approaching: we fear, therefore, that all the ills to be apprehended from climate may now be expected in the midst of the campaign, or before the troops can well be brought into action.

When or how the convoy is again to attempt the voyage we do not learn: but it seems to be the opinion, on your side the water, that the commander in chief will sail in a frigate without delay, and that the fleet will follow, in small divisions, as speedily as the ships can be repaired and made ready for sea. This would undoubtedly be most advisable, for the waiting to assemble large convoys, and the delays and accidents which necessarily happen to them, at sea, would seem to be the very bane of the enterprise.

We are still told that the Cork division may be daily expected, yet we learn that it had not sailed when the packet left Falmouth. From all we can collect it would seem proba-

ble that more than six thousand troops, and upwards of sixty ships, many long since arrived, may have still to wait through another tedious period at Barbadoes.

We find it among the reports of the day that honors are to be conferred on the Admiral for braving the weather, during so many weeks at sea, and returning to port *in England* with so great a number of the convey in safety. On reading this the captain of our ship wittily asked—"What honors are those to receive, then, who fought through all the perilous storms, and have made good their passage to a port *in the West Indies?*"

Some say that it is likely Admiral Christian will not again attempt this inauspicious voyage, and that Admiral Cornwallis will take command of the fleet when it next sails : but concerning this you will have the best information in England. Our prayers are that, let who will command, you will send out the convoy, and not withhold from the troops their long-expected, and much-honored chief.

If we are to give any credit to what we read in the papers it would seem that the pro-

spect of peace is more remote than some had ventured to hope. The Austrians, we are sorry to find, have been checked on the Rhine, and defeated under General de Vins in Piedmont. Before we sailed from England appearances were somewhat pacific, and we were not without the hope of soon returning to our friends—indeed the delay in the departure of the fleet had been explained, by many, upon the probability of an approaching peace! But things again look more hostile, and it seems likely that our tropical sojourn may be of longer duration than was at first expected.

The papers we have received having, been printed during the Christmas holidays, furnish us with no parliamentary news; but we learn from them, with much regret, that our country experiences a scarcity of corn, and of specie. Without money, and without bread John Bull would make war very badly indeed! Wheat we find is at the extravagant price of thirteen shillings per bushel, and bread as high as thirteen-pence half-penny the quartern loaf. This, we fear, may create dissatisfaction, and lead to commotions or ill-judged excesses, from the people erroneously attributing events

to causes which have no just connection with them*.

Having culled all the leading heads of news Dr. Cleghorn and myself went on shore in the evening, and returned the papers to Mr. Hinde. We now took an opportunity of calling at the post-office to ask for letters in the hope of hearing from you all ; and there we learned that a sad scene of confusion had prevailed throughout the day, from the crowd forcing their way into the office, and each person tumbling over the whole heap to look for his own letters.

I am sorry to have again to inform you that late accounts from Grenada state the island to be in great danger, and that we hold possession of it by a very precarious tenure, the troops being pent up in the town, and not in sufficient force to march against the Brigands. From St. Vincent we hear, also, that the inhabitants have been obliged to fly to arms

* We have been so accustomed to pay extravagantly for bread, in England, since this period, that the price which then seemed frightfully enormous, might now be deemed moderate.

to assist the military, and that still they are not powerful enough to defeat the Charibs. It is further added that the negroes, impatient of remaining inactive, have petitioned to be sent against the enemy, threatening to go over to the Charibs if not soon employed to subdue them.

I had nearly forgotten to inform you that a French spy has been detected among us, who has been, for some time, watching the proceedings of the fleet at Barbadoes. It were unnecessary to add that his life will be the forfeit of his temerity.

Sir Ralph Abercromby arrives at Barbadoes on St. Patrick's day. Joyous scene in Carlisle bay. Author's reflections upon scenes which may follow. Success of the General in his third attempt to make the voyage. Many rumours expected to prevail. Influence of season with respect to a campaign in the West Indies. The general Cuyler, and Clarendon arrive in Carlisle bay. State of the Clarendon. Perils of the general Cuyler. A Dutch mode of punishment. Progress of a leaky ship. Concerning the ships of the December convoy which made good their passage.

March 17.

HOW eventful are the hours which now pass before us! The sons of St. Patrick have not felt

themselves more blessed, nor hailed in more joyous greetings this hallowed day than the anxious multitude at Barbadoes. It was only yesterday that I took up my pen to announce to you a glad arrival, and I have now to mention one still more happy. Before breakfast this morning a signal appeared at the fort, implying that a ship of war was in sight ; and about eight o'clock a proud frigate, with sails swelling to the breeze, cut her liquid path silently into the bay, and dropped her anchor in the midst of the fleet. A general feeling of joy, instantly, spread throughout the harbour. It was the *Arethusa*, with Sir Ralph Abercromby, and the officers of his staff on board. A signal was made from the agent, and all the ships in the bay immediately manned their yards, and rigging to hail, and to welcome, in loud salutation, our long-expected commander in chief. Three heart-felt cheers were, rapturously, shouted from every vessel, and as cordially echoed by the *Arethusa's* company.

The scene thus introduced was novel and peculiar. It was, also, highly interesting. The yards, the tops, the masts and rigging of all the vessels being covered with men, they

resembled clusters of bees, as they hang about the hive at the moment previous to swarming. Each ship was, indeed, a hive of men, but it was without drones, for all were equally industrious in greeting the arrival of the "king bee" among them.

Crowded with yards and masts the harbour resembled a thick forest—the leaves of which were men, not rustling in the wind, but set in motion by the more animating breeze of joy and gratulation.—Loud shouts of welcome resounded throughout the bay, and when the General went off in the boat towards the landing place, each ship repeated three cheers as he passed—the multitude upon the beach again shouting his welcome as he stepped on shore. On reaching the government house at Pilgrim he was received with a salute of twenty-one guns. The same number was then repeated from the fort, which we had remarked did not fire any salute when the frigate entered the harbour.

All is now life and activity. An impulsive sensation vibrates throughout the bay. Every breast throbs with ardour, and, inspired

by the presence of the commander in chief, every one looks forward to a successful campaign. No one imagines that fate has destined him to fall; but each anticipates the joyous moment, when he shall return to relate histories of battles won, and islands conquered, to his friends in peaceful England.—Yet alas! to how few is it allotted again to visit either England or their friends! But to such reflections let me be silent:—to speak them were unmilitary! Still the duties I may have to perform will, sometimes, call up strong associations in my mind, and amidst the busy din of war, or the loud rejoicings of victory, my very soul will often swell with painful sympathy. Even while I may feel a lively joy in my country's success, my agonized spirit will dwell on scenes of desolation; and be absorbed in the contemplation of individual sufferings and affliction. However brilliant the campaign, the sad horrors of the contest will, frequently, usurp the possession of my mind, and create an afflictive impression. But it would ill become me to expatiate on the evils I am destined to deplore. Upon the great subject of war be it mine to view the

events before me with the eye of a soldier—my immediate duty will be a sufficient tax upon my feelings, as a man !

In his third attempt to reach the islands the commander in chief has been very successful ; the *Arcthusa* having failed only on the 14th of February, and, consequently, made the voyage in thirty days. The general takes up his abode at a large building a little way out of the town, called the King's house, which is to be made the head quarters, during the assembling of the troops, and the continuance of the army at Barbadoes.

Much news will now, of course, obtain currency, and various and strange reports will find their way into circulation ; many perhaps equally devoid of truth and probability. Every one being anxious to catch up each word concerning England, and the expedition, much will be hastily heard by some, and as hastily repeated by others, whereby even facts will become so distorted as to lose all features of correctness ; and we shall not dare to rely upon any rumour we may chance to hear.

Among other things it is now said that only the remaining troops, belonging to those regiments already in the West Indies, are to come out with the fleet; and that the others are actually sent into different cantonments, in England, there to remain until next September, before they again sail for the West Indies. Of this we have many doubts; yet might it seem to be a prudent arrangement: for, advanced as the season now is, it were, perhaps, wise policy to postpone the grand object of the expedition for a December campaign; and to employ the troops which are now here in restoring tranquillity to our disturbed and endangered islands, thus fulfilling the more immediate, although perhaps the minor objects of the armament.

A body of troops brought out in October or November would have the season before them for a long campaign, but were they to leave England now, the length of time required for the voyage and for their being assembled at Barbadoes, and again prepared for leaving it, would bring them so near to the wet season, and to the hot and unhealthy period of the year, that not only would multi-

tudes fall victims to disease, but impediments, occasioned by the weather, might interrupt the proceedings of the campaign before any thing important could be effected.

We find that the Cork fleet has, unquestionably, been for several weeks at sea, and may be daily expected ; the *Arethusa* having spoken several of the ships of that convoy upon her passage. At the time the *Arethusa* came into the bay two other ships appeared in sight : they are since arrived, and prove to be the *General Cuyler* merchantman, of our division (long supposed to be lost), and the *Clarendon* transport of the Cork division : —their arrival, and the reported approach of the Cork fleet add to the auspicious events of St. Patrick's day.

The sad uncertainties of a sea voyage are strongly exemplified in the combined arrival of the *General Cuyler*, and the *Clarendon*. The one sailed on the 9th of December, and the other on the 9th of February ; (periods more distant than the time usually required for making the voyage) yet, so favorable had been the elements to the one, and so

adverse to the other, that they both came into Carlisle bay at the same moment.

The Clarendon, we are told, left the harbour of Cove with a fleet of 132 sail, having 10,000 troops on board ; but she parted from the convoy, in the course of the first night, and has not seen any ship belonging to it since. She has brought out nearly 200 men of the 99th regiment, who, we are sorry to find, have been far from healthy, notwithstanding the favorable passage they have made. From this we are led to fear that those who are longer detained at sea may arrive in a very sickly state.

The safety of the General Cuyler spread consolation among us, and very much augmented the great and general joy diffused by the arrival of the commander in chief. You will feel that I had real pleasure in felicitating my friend Nichol, who was one of the passengers, when I tell you that it had obtained universal belief that this ship was lost at sea, or, at best, taken by the enemy. Indeed, for several weeks past, such had been the despondent feel-

ings regarding her, that it would have been a great relief to us to have heard that she was in the enemy's possession. She had sailed with us on the 9th of December, and was the last ship we had spoken in the European seas, which was on the 4th of January, and on the 10th of February our ship reached Carlisle bay; hence from our having been five weeks in harbour without hearing of her, scarcely a hope remained of ever seeing her again. Nor were our apprehensions far from being realized, for on the 7th of January, only three days after we had hailed her, she sprung a leak, and during twenty succeeding days, was only kept from sinking by the persevering toil and exertions of the ship's company and the passengers, all of whom took their regular watch at the pumps, for six or eight hours each day. With great difficulty she was kept afloat: daily their peril increased, and, for nearly three weeks, they had only the melancholy prospect of going to the bottom, before they could possibly make any port. Almost exhausted with fatigue and apprehension, the hope of being saved had nearly abandoned them, when, fortunately, they made one of the Canary Islands.

Few occurrences can be so truly distressing, or so strongly calculated to depress the mind with desponding feelings, as this critical, and very perilous situation at sea. To prevent the threatened fate, excessive bodily exertions are required, when, from the impression of terror, a sufficient degree of hope scarcely remains to stimulate or support the fatigue. Extreme toil is demanded—perhaps, too, in an exhausting, and ungenial climate, and under the depressing prospect of the vessel sinking in despite of every effort !

The Dutch are said to have a mode of punishment somewhat resembling this very dangerous and afflicting situation, although infinitely removed from it, on account of the person who is exposed to it knowing a certain means of saving himself, provided he has enough of industry to continue his exertions. The prisoner is confined in a room, into which water is made constantly to flow, so increasing in depth that he must, inevitably, be drowned if he is idle : but if he will be industrious and persevere at the pump, he knows that a certain proportion of labor will keep down the water, and preserve his life. Surely none but the amphibious and

toiling Hollanders could have invented such a punishment—such an aquatic remedy! although it must be allowed to be a most excellent one against idleness. But in a leaky ship at sea no such certainty is attainable. The leak may increase, and no human effort may be sufficient to keep the vessel upon the surface; and, in such case, all resource is denied,—the impending doom can, no way, be averted! No mental powers, no bodily exertion can ought avail. Safety is not to be attained by any effort of human strength, or human wisdom. No opening is left for intellect or enterprise. Each road leads equally to despair; and the event can neither be avoided nor resisted. On each hand the wretched sufferers see only the wide jaw of destruction. The leak still increasing, the water continues to gain upon all the means employed. It grows deeper: the sinking ship moves heavily on: her weight opposes all the force of wind and sails: she labours to proceed: her progress is more and more impeded: the slow motion ceases at intervals: a dread pause succeeds: the ship no longer moves! A momentary silence,—a death-like stillness prevails throughout the crew; or impulsive horror ejaculates in loud

bewailings !——She sinks to the bottom, and all hands perish in the silent deep.

You will join in our rejoicings that such, although long threatened, was not the fate of the General Cuyler. Happily she put into Palmas, and was saved. At the time of gaining the harbour she had many feet water in the hold, and, only with great exertion, was kept afloat while the cargo was removed. A fortnight's delay was occasioned in repairing her, and fitting her for the remainder of the voyage. It is upwards of fourteen weeks since she sailed from England, twelve of which have been actually passed at sea : most of them in struggling against storms and gales—against contrary winds, and contending elements !

The passengers are quite in surprize to find that, even at this late period, their ship is among the *early arrivals* of the convoy ; having imagined that, during their perilous delay, the whole fleet must have reached Barbadoes, and the troops been again embarked for their respective destinations.

On the other hand, all who arrive in the ships from England or Ireland are astonished to find so many vessels of the convoy at Barbadoes, having been led to believe, from the account of those who returned, that the whole must have either gone back, put into different ports on the passage, or been lost at sea.

LETTER XXXIII.

Carlisle Bay the Thames of the West Indies. Arrivals from various quarters. A slave-ship engages a French Privateer. The Madras E. Indiaman, and a packet arrive in Carlisle bay. Admiral Christian receives the Honors of Knighthood. Visit to the Venus slave-ship. Author and Dr. Clegborn continue to use walking exercise. Estate of Mr. Daniel. Tamarind tree, and fruit.

Barbadoes, March 22.

CARLISLE bay is become quite the busy Thames of the West Indies. Scarcely a day passes without the arrival of vessels from one part of the globe or another ; and to us this affords a degree of variety and amusement ; for we are frequently enlivened by the signals made for vessels either coming into harbour, or appearing in sight, and which prove to be from various, and widely separated coasts. English ships of war, merchantmen, and transports ; slave ships from the coast of Africa ; packets ; prizes ; American traders ; island vessels, privateers, fishing smacks, and different kinds of boats, cutters, and luggers, are among the al-

most hourly variety, to be seen either entering or quitting Carlisle bay.

The day after the arrival of the *Arethusa* we were early enlivened by signals for other vessels coming in from windward ; but they proved to be ships from very opposite coasts ; one being from Hallifax, and the other a Guinea-man with a cargo of slaves from Africa.

Several vessels of the Cork fleet have arrived within the few last days ; but none of them bring any accurate tidings of the fleet, most of them having parted from the convoy, during the first or second night after quitting the harbour, and not having seen it since. The *Charlotte* transport was chased by a privateer at the distance of only a few leagues from Barbadoes, and must, inevitably, have been taken, but for the fortunate circumstance of a slave ship, from the coast of Guinea, coming up at the time and engaging her pursuer. A running action was maintained, for two hours, between the Guinea-man and the privateer, when the latter sheered off, leaving the slave ship, and her protégée, to pursue their

way quietly to Barbadoes—the slave ship having suffered considerably in her rigging.

The Madras East Indiaman and a packet are this day arrived from England. They sailed, the one from Falmouth, the other from St. Helen's, on the 23d of February, and have made the voyage within a month. The Madras brings a cargo of ordnance stores. She sailed alone, and made a running passage. Several persons availed themselves of the opportunity of coming out in this ship as passengers; and she has also a small party of artillery-men on board.

The arrival of the present packet has not caused so great a sensation as was produced by the appearance of that which I mentioned to you before, although we are much pleased and gratified to see it. We have now an ample supply both of English and American papers, and from the arrivals being more frequent, and the commander in chief among us, the sad torpor of preceding weeks no longer reigns. Activity prevails, and the suspense of waiting is alleviated by busy preparation.

We now learn that Admiral Christian has received the honor of knighthood for his exertions, in keeping the sea so long, during such dreadfully tempestuous weather: and we are told that Admiral Cornwallis, and Sir Hugh Christian are both coming out to the West Indies. By those on board the packet it is reported they were to sail the day that she came away; but the passengers in the Madras say that they were not to sail for nearly a month after. The latter ship coming from the place where the convoy had assembled, and the circumstance of many of the ships being disabled and requiring to be repaired, render the report from the Madras the most probable.

We have lately had an opportunity of visiting the Venus slave ship of London, just arrived with a cargo of slaves, from the coast of Africa. The ship appeared small: there was a want of space, and the negroes seemed crowded; but, in all other respects we were pleased to remark the excellence of the accommodations, and the great attention paid to the health and comfort of the slaves. The cargo consisted of 230 prime negroes, all in high health, and good

spirits. The ship was remarkably clean. No sickness had appeared among the blacks, or the crew ; nor had any one died upon the passage. They made the voyage in six weeks, and the slaves were fed the whole time with Guinea corn. The average value of the cargo is calculated at nearly £ 50 each negro. The captain has but few hands in his ship's company, yet from his kind treatment of the slaves he has so well secured their attachment and obedience, as to feel no apprehension of a revolt, or of any occurrence to menace their safety.

Dr. Cleghorn and myself continue our pedestrian excursions about the neighbourhood of the bay. In one of our late rambles we ascended some hills in the vicinity of Bridge-Town, which afford a fine landscape of the island, together with a view of the town, the harbour, and the sea.

Situated below this mountainous range is the plantation of a Mr. Daniel ; an old and rural estate which is sheltered, and rendered picturesque by the neighbouring hills. Here we saw a very lofty and fine avenue of trees, of the valuable *Lignum Vitæ* ; also an immensely

large and ancient tamarind tree, of more extended branches, and wider trunk than the antique oaks, or spreading elms, which are sometimes seen to grace the door-way of our old English dwellings. The tamarind is of the Minosa tribe, and may be regarded as a very handsome example of the vegetable creation. It bears an immense quantity of fruit, which hangs in a filiquose form, among the small leaves, and the numerous pods being of a dirty brown colour they give a singular appearance, without adding to the beauty of the tree. Upon this old ornament of the mansion were hanging many bushels—perhaps I might say many hogsheds of tamarinds, which were left to fall useless to the ground. Esteemed as this fruit is in Europe, in its preserved state, it seems to be as little valued here, as the common crab of the hedges in England, and is equally neglected, not being considered worth the labor of gathering, or the expence of the sugar required in preserving it.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

